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WHEN I MEAN TO MARRY.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

When do I mean to marry?—Well—
'Tis idle to dispute with fate;
But if you choose to hear me tell,
Pray listen while I fix the date:—

When daughters haste, with eager feet,
A mother's daily toil to share;
Can make the puddings which they eat,
And mend the stockings which they wear;

When maidens look upon a man
As in himself what they would marry,
And not as army-soldiers scan
A sutler or a commissary;

When gentle ladies who have got
The offer of a lover's hand,
Consent to share his "earthly lot,"
And do not mean his lot of land;

When young mechanics are allowed
To find and wed the farmers' girls
Who *don't* expect to be endowed
With rubies, diamonds and pearls;

When wives, in short, shall freely give
Their hearts and hands to aid their spouses,
And live as they were wont to live
Within their sires' one-story houses:

Then, madam,—if I'm not too old,—
Rejoiced to quit this lonely life,
I'll brush my beaver; cease to scold;
And look about me for a wife!

MOSES ORAN;

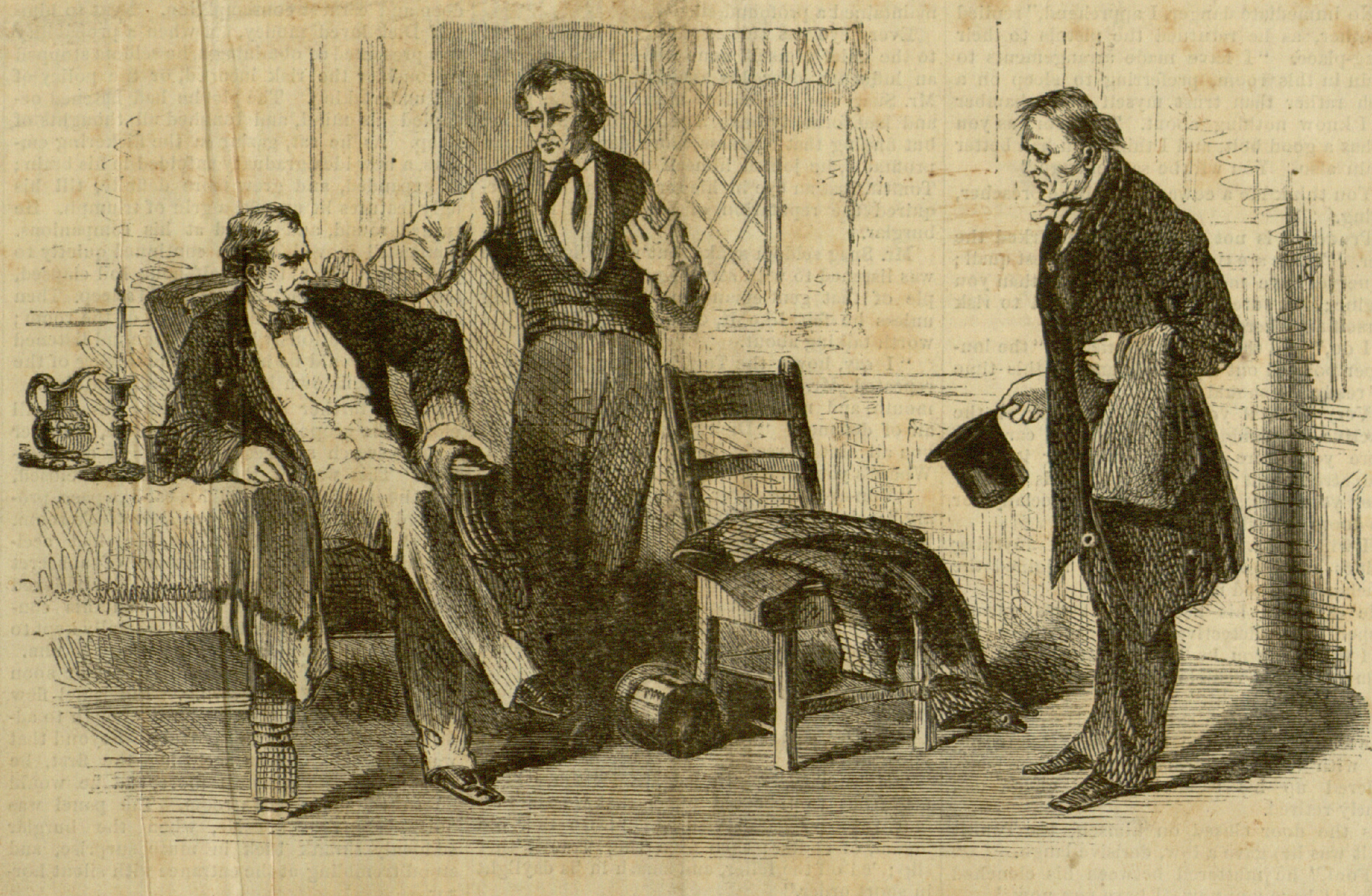
OR,

"THE BURGLARS' NEST."

BY GEO. CLARENCE BLANCHARD.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEST OF THE TOMTIT.



THE "DETECTIVE" AND THE BENIGHTED CLERGYMAN.

Near the close of a cold day in October, a traveller dismounted from his jaded horse, and entered a little hostelry, or tavern, situated in the then wildest region of Pennsylvania. The stranger, who was a large, stout-looking man, heavily bearded, paused before the door that led into the bar-room, and peeped inquisitively in; seeing a small group sitting around the table, he walked very leisurely toward them, introducing himself in a frank, easy style.

"A good evening, gentlemen, to you all."

The company, who were earnestly engaged in conversing, hardly noticed his entrance, but when he spoke, they instantly paused and greeted the new-comer with a look plainly expressive of surprise, curiosity and anger. One of the party, who had a less sinister and surly face than the rest, gravely advanced toward him, eyeing him sharply, as he said:

"You wish lodgings, my man?"

"Certainly I do, Mr. Beg (who at the mention of his own name visibly started); what else should I stop here for? There's my pony wants the same thing; attend to him first, and in the meanwhile I will make myself at home."

So saying, the stranger, scarcely heeding the general scowl which greeted him as he said this, cooly lit his cigar, and forthwith stretched himself in an easy posture in Tim Beg's favorite arm-chair, much to the astonishment of that gentleman, who slowly moved toward the door, winking slyly to his companions as he did so.

The stranger commenced to smoke, eyeing the company with a nonchalance and familiarity that took them completely by surprise.

"Vot yer doing here for?" growled a dark-visaged, ugly-looking scoundrel, whose pox-marked face was half obscured by a dirty cap. He rose as he spoke, and drew out a sharp knife.

"Oh, ho!" laughed the stranger, sending up a long spiral column of smoke, and regarding the other with a half sneer. "Don't attempt to frighten me; aint your name Dick Hatton?"

Scarcely had he asked the question, before the whole party sprang instantaneously to their feet, and confronted him with the rage of tigers—a more precious crew of cut-throats could hardly have been found.

"Kill him! kill him!" was the general cry. Pistols and bowie-knives were promiscuously drawn, and one could see they longed to lap the blood of the unfortunate man, as they crowded round their victim. Dick Hatton, with an ugly grin, interposed.

"Stop, boys, the fellow is safe. I vant to catachise 'im afore he's made mince-meat of. Come, now, who are ye?"

During all the tumult occasioned by his remark, the stranger had kept his easy, half-recumbent position, regardless of the menacing group, continuing to smoke with the most astonishing coolness, and eying them all with a sort of saucy smile that was absolutely provoking.

"Come, now, who are ye?" repeated Dick Hatton, tightening his grasp on his bowie-knife.

The ruffians pressed nearer, a dozen knives were raised, but still the stranger manifested not the slightest symptom of alarm. Carelessly divesting himself of his beard, he proceeded in the same quiet way to displace a black curling wig. In one second more, the gang had burst into a wild halloo, which sent Tim Beg rushing back.

"Blow my eyes!" exclaimed he, letting his pipe fall from his mouth, in his amazement. "Why, it's the Tomtit!"

"Nobody else," replied that individual, who had not changed his position, but was puffing vigorously at his cigar. "You're bright people all of you, 'pon my word; now, Beg, see if you can trot back to the stable, and put my horse in better quarters than you at first intended; and hearken, lad, tell that spoony of a wife of yours to fix up something hot; I'm blasted hungry. Now then, what are you all gaping at me for?" added the Tomtit, surveying the group with a derisive smile. "Didn't know me, when I've cheated you so often? Nice fellows!"

The gang indeed looked very foolish, at the unexpected denouement; their weapons were once more returned to their hiding places, and they stood staring at their chief, scarcely believing their own eyes.

"Ther devil 'imself would find it 'ard to tell ye," observed Dick, sulkily. "Vy, Beg, as knows everybody, with von eye, gets taken in; but, Tomtit, vot's the news?"

"Never you trouble your head for that, it will come in good time," replied the Tomtit, draining a glass of ale, officiously placed before him. "Everything jus as I suspected; the police were on our track at Gamble's, but I fixed 'em." With this brief synopsis of news, the Tomtit leaned back in his chair, and continued to smoke in a thoughtful, meditating manner.

In about fifteen minutes, Mrs. Beg, a portly, red-haired lady, announced that supper was ready, and the gang adjourned to a small apartment in the rear part of the building, where a rude meal was served up; a roast pig formed the principal feature of the entertainment, which was quickly washed down with a liberal supply of whiskey.

"Now, then," said the Tomtit, after he had satisfied his hunger, and was stirring the components of a second glassful of punch; "now, then, boys, I'm ready to tell the news. In the first place, Crib has been cribbed."

"What!" ejaculated the gang with one voice, "Crib nabbed?"

"Crib is cribbed, and that's the short and long of it," observed the Tomtit, gloomily. "Once was the time the trade could be carried on, and none of us ran the least bit of a risk; even a 'Nest' wasn't necessary; now the thing gets every day more dangerous, and the profits grow smaller."

"But what about Crib?" inquired several of the gang, anxiously.

"Crib," continued the Tomtit, "acted like a precious fool; I told him all the boys had left but him, but he was so blasted confident he kept lagging, and putting off, till he got cribbed. He would just close his peepers, and walk into the pit without any one helping him in; confound him, he nearly dragged me with him."

The company now pressed the Tomtit for more detailed information, from which it appeared that that unlucky individual had indulged in a spree, and having boasted pretty freely of his achievements in the burglary line, was incontinently pounced upon by the Philadelphia police, who had long been on the look-out for him.

"He von't peach I 'ope," observed Dick Hatton. "It vould be a werry bad blow-up arter all the trouble of 'ouse keeping, not saying nothing about 'aving no private conweniences, and a place for to 'ide when ther vind blows 'igh."

"He aint going to peach," said Mr. Beg, authoritatively, "not he, I know him to be a bully man."

"So do I, so do I," exclaimed several voices at once.

"As to the matter of that," remarked Tomtit, "he'll keep things dark, and may be set them on the wrong scent—let him alone for that. But blast me," continued the gentleman, "that isn't the thing; we can't spare Crib; why the whole twelve of us are wanted for next week's job, and Crib was such a locksmith that his services were next to gold, but it is just our confounded luck."

The Tomtit, with this brief reference to the valuable qualifications of Mr. Crib, proceeded to mix a third glass of whiskey punch, and to swallow the same with a look of becoming sorrow and resignation.

"As he's gone," continued the Tomtit musingly, "I suppose it's best to try a different plan; I tell you what boys, I have a great mind to postpone the visit to old Van Cleeker's for a fortnight at least, till I could get one of us in some way connected with the house; I heard the other day that the old gentleman wanted a coachman, and if I had somebody to personate one, why it would be a very rum thing to get him in there, and then, don't you see, there would be no need of a locksmith."

"Vy don't *you* go, Tomtit, yer vould make a rum coachee, yer vould?" suggested Dick with a grin.

"Why, as to that, I suppose I might suit the old gentleman to a hair," returned the Tomtit complacently; "but I have something more important to manage; no, I'll tell you what boys, I've a good mind to send one of you."

"Good," said several voices.

"I know," continued the Tomtit, "all about the house, as far as that goes, for I have visited every nook and corner myself, but still it would be very convenient to have somebody to let us in; Crib could have opened the back door easily, but seeing he's caged, we'll have to give up getting in that way."

"Hist!" suddenly exclaimed Mr. Beg, describing with his finger a rapid movement in the direction of the window. The burglars started and pricked up their ears as they distinctly heard the sound of an approaching vehicle; it was just wheeling up before the tavern, and Mr. Beg, who had been sent to reconnoitre, quickly returned to report to the anxious gang that it was only a traveller who had lost his way and wished to stay over night. "He's a jolly looking 'un and has a big carpet bag," whispered Mr. Beg.

This intelligence caused a momentary excitement; the burglars started up, their fierce eyes sparkling with eager delight, but meeting the gaze of their chief they sullenly resumed their seats.

"Is it a werry comfortable looking bag?" enquired Dick, rubbing his hands in expectation of plunder.

"Very promising looking I should say," replied Mr. Beg, "but what shall I do with the owner."

Four tallow candles were now brought into the room, and the burglars held a hurried conversation as to how they should dispose of their visitor; some were for dispatching him at once, others were for making away with him silently, but as a prolonged discussion seemed likely to arise, Mr. Beg was commissioned to see to the personal comfort of the gentleman, provide him with a supper, and make ready his apartment, which last direction caused Mr. Beg to grin from ear to ear.

"Mind," said Dick, "to put 'im in the room vot's got the trap-door, vich is ther werry model of conweniénce, and ther comfortablest room in ther 'ouse."

Mr. Beg laughed approvingly at Mr. Hatton's humorous allusion to the trap-door, and left his friends to continue their consultation.

"My advice," said Dick, "is to run 'im down ven he's snoozing, and drop 'im in ther vat; dead men doesn't tell tales."

"Dead men does tell tales, though," interrupted one of the burglars, lowering his voice to an impressive whisper; "they come up and peach, if its only to get a cove in trouble."

"I think so, too," chimed in another, who was known by the soubriquet of Molecat; "they'll come up sometimes ven its werry inconwenient and troublesome. Vonce, ven I wos doing business in the pad line, in York, we cotched a fellow one night who wos werry lushy. It wos a werry good haul, an' some on us was for letting him go; but he kept such a hollerin' and threatening, that, arter parleying a leetle, Bill Hedges gives him a knock on the head vich silenced him; vell, afore we tossed him in the river, Bill ties a big rock to his neck to prevent his coming up and breeding a lot o' nasty questions; but the werry next morning the spiteful corpse comes ashore without the rock, and holding tight onto a piece of Bill Hedges' jacket, vich wos the means of conwicting him and sending him to the gallows."

Mr. Molecat's record of his personal experience seemed to make but little impression on his listeners, for the main subject under consideration, was resumed, and a lively debate sprung up, which was, however, not participated in by the Tomtit.

That gentleman sat quietly listening to the various opinions, deigning no other comment but an occasional nod of his head. It was evident at the burglars were unanimously in favor of instantly destroying the traveller; though they essentially varied in their proposed plan of operations.

Mr. Dick Hatton watched his leader's countenance during the progress of the conversation, but it looked stolidly indifferent.

"Vot's yer opinion, Tomtit?" he inquired anxiously. "Aint yer going to say nothing?"

"Of course I am," replied Tomtit, planting his legs defiantly on the table; "my opinion is the opinion that's got to be adopted, and no chattering. Now look here," continued he, fixing his restless eyes on the group, "you all want to make way with this traveller?"

"That's so," exclaimed the burglars.

"And I," continued Tomtit, cooly, "am for letting him go."

It would be impossible to describe the effect produced by this decision. The burglars jumped up, and oaths and imprecations of every description, were showered on their leader.

"I say," repeated the chief unmoved by the threatening attitude of his men, "he shall go free—not a hair of his head shall be touched; and who dares object?" His stern, gray eyes glanced from burglar to burglar, and they involuntarily quailed before their defiant gleam.

"Now listen, you fools, to my reasons," continued the Tomtit, angrily, as the overawed villains shrank back into their seats. "You all know next week we do a heavy job in the wholesale line; after it's done we must keep dark; the 'Nest' is the only place we are safe in, and here we must remain till the matter blows over; but, if this man is missed, between that and the job there'll be such a hue and cry raised that we won't dare to show our heads; now do you understand?"

"Vell, s'pose we run the horse and wagon up the country, and hitch his clothes by the side uv the river, vich vill look as though he circumwented himself?" suggested Mr. Molecat.

The Tomtit shook his head contemptuously.

"Now, then, what would you get for the painstaking and risk? Why, just a carpet-bag, and maybe a few trifles; people aint such fools as you take them, to go lugging money round the country—there would be plenty of questions asked about the carpet-bag, and likely enough the horse might take it into his head to come back—horses aint fools either," observed the Tomtit, sarcastically.

Mr. Molecat scratched his head, as an expressive indication that the argument was unanswerable, and a short pause ensued.

"Vell," remarked Dick Hatton, breaking the silence, "ther Tomtit's right, I s'pose, but it does look sorter hard arter the bird's cotched to perwent the picking of 'im. It's mean, that's vot it is!"

The Tomtit vouchsafed no reply to this sullen speech, but lighting a fresh cigar, he rose, shook himself, and called Mr. Beg into an adjoining apartment.

"Where is the man?" said he.

"In the back room, eating his supper," was that worthy's reply; "you can peep at him easy enough, for I left the door on the swing."

The Tomtit accordingly crept stealthily into the passage, and getting on his hands and knees, obtained a very excellent view of the stranger, who was quietly proceeding with his meal. Scarcely, however, had the Tomtit's restless eye peered within, than he gave a start of surprise, and retreated immediately.

"Here, Beg," he whispered, in an excited tone, as that individual followed him back again to the private room; "here's a confounded go. Who do you suppose that man is?"

Mr. Beg, of course, intimated that he didn't know, whereupon the Tomtit, looking around to satisfy himself they were alone, brought his hand in the form of a trumpet close to Mr. Beg's ear, and whispered:

"*It's Duffy!*"

Mr. Beg's face turned deathly pale.

"What," he whispered, "the Detective?"

"The same," rejoined the Tomtit, with an expression plainly denoting his agitation. "Who or what should bring him here alone, I neither know nor can guess—Beg, keep this from the boys, they are savage enough now, but if they should find out the truth, I couldn't control 'em. They would tear this man to pieces, but, Beg, that mustn't be; they must be led off; for it would be the worst thing yet to kill him; he would be missed as sure as preaching."

"Is this the one who has been trying so long to find our Nest?" inquired Beg.

"The very same," replied Tomtit. "You know the State government has offered a reward of over five thousand dollars for the discovery of our whereabouts, and this Duffy has been sneaking around trying to find us, not so much for the possession of the reward as some private aim; he aint a regular Detective, or he might be led off; years ago he was on our track. I have been watching him all along, designing to finish him when a good opportunity offered, but the wiry scoundrel managed to escape me; he may disguise himself as much as he likes, he can't cheat, me."

"He's disguised, then?" said Mr. Beg, amazed afresh.

"Of course he is; that fatness isn't real. He thinks he's unknown to me, but I'll pay him off yet," rejoined the Tomtit, with a silent imprecation. "I'll get rid of him, but it mustn't be done here. Now then, Beg, listen: Fetch me a lantern and the key of the—— You understand me."

Beg nodded his head, and flew off with alacrity. No one entertained a greater admiration of the Tomtit than that gentleman; he regarded him with the same deference a dog would show to his master, and was contented as long as he could testify his servile affection; he quickly returned with the lantern and key.

As the Tomtit was about to start he turned and whispered:

"Let me out by the back door, Beg."

"All right," was the quiet response.

"Not a word to the boys, mind; if they miss me, tell 'em I've gone to bed."

The Tomtit, with this parting caution, made his exit from the door, which Mr. Beg held open, and walked rapidly off.

The faithful custodian of the Burglars' Nest stood for a few minutes listening, till the retreating footsteps of the burglar chief had died away in the distance; then he carefully closed and relocked the door, and returned to the bar, there to muse over the surprising and startling disclosures which the Tomtit had made to him.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH MR. DETECTIVE DUFFY MAKES A FRIEND.

It was one of those remarkable circumstances that sometimes happen in real life, that Mr. Detective Duffy should have unconsciously blundered into the very place he had been searching for vainly the past two years. As he sat quietly eating his supper he little dreamt that a few yards off stood a figure which, the mere sight of, would have moved him to an absolute frenzy; and well it might,—there was a story connected with that figure, a tale so heart-rending, so terrible, so revolting,—of faith broken, of hospitality abused, of wrongs perpetrated, as could have been well passed over. It had left its impress on the care-worn features of that old man, discernible in every lineament; his gray eyes seemed to flash with the same spirit,—of deep, absorbing revenge.

He finished his supper, and moving his bench nearer the fire, took out a silver repeater and compared the hour with a large, old-fashioned clock that was ticking in one corner of the room; having done this, and replaced his watch back again to its fob, Mr. Detective Duffy proceeded to warm his legs, and rub them slowly up and down in a contemplative mood, alternately gazing in the fire, then around the room, and finally, with no small degree of surprise, on the bluff face and form of Mr. Timothy Beg himself. That gentleman, who had very quietly entered, took off his hat and made a low bow.

"Sorry to trouble you," said Mr. Beg, apologetically, "but there's a parson outside here who had the bad luck to lose his horse by some nasty accident, and wants lodgings for the night; seeing you've got a good fire, and p'r'aps feel lonely, I reckon you won't object to let him share it for awhile. Poor fellow," continued the innkeeper, "he looks pretty nigh fagged out."

"Let him come in, by all means," said the Detective, kindly.

"Walk in, my man," said Mr. Beg, patronizingly, and the stranger modestly entered.

Mr. Beg then retired, after assuring his guest that his room should be ready in a very few moments.

The new-comer's appearance indicated that he belonged to the poorer class of the clergy; he was clad in a long cloak soiled with mud, and bore in one hand his saddle-bags, also much stained by contact with the earth; he had evidently been walking a considerable distance, for his countenance wore a haggard and wearied expression.

"You seem to have met with a rough time of it, my friend," remarked Mr. Duffy, as he moved his bench so as to allow the other to get seated.

His companion, whose face was one of a marked devotional cast, bowed his head in silent assent.

"Let me relieve you of your cloak," said the Detective, sympathizingly; "you look much fatigued."

"Many thanks," replied the other, as the Detective assisted to remove the garment; "a long walk, and the excitement consequent upon a serious accident, have indeed somewhat unstrung me; but, thanks to a kind Providence, the danger is past."

"Your accident, then, was a serious one?"

"Very," responded the preacher, raising his eyes with earnestness to the ceiling; "verily, the danger was great, but a Higher Power preserved me. I was riding on in fancied security, when suddenly my horse pitched into a deep ravine; I was thrown violently to the earth, and knew nothing till I found myself lying alongside of the poor animal, who had broken one of his legs; his fall broke the force of mine, and, as you see, with the exception of a few bruises, I am uninjured. Removing my saddle-bags, I crawled back into the road, scarcely knowing where to turn my steps; but, thanks to a kind Providence, I was guided to this inn."

"Your escape was indeed miraculous," said Mr. Duffy. "I am sorry that you should lose your horse, which must prove a great misfortune."

"A very great loss, sir," replied the preacher. "He was a faithful beast, and has carried me safely many a dark night. I can scarcely account for his unfortunate mis-step on this occasion."

"The roads are very treacherous hereabouts," said the detective; "I once nearly experienced a similar mishap."

"It falls heavily on me," rejoined the preacher, with a sigh, "for I am a poor man."

"Your calling has many cares!"

"Cares!" echoed the preacher, sadly, "it has manifold cares. It is well for my rich brethren who are clothed in fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, to talk about their cares; but, sir, when they have experienced the trials that I have passed through; when they have suffered what I have endured; when they have borne hunger, cold, neglect insult—ah, sir,—even ignominy, they may talk about their cares and preach as many homilies as they please on contentment and resignation. The world calls me nothing but a poor itinerant, little understanding why I have chosen a life so thankless."

The preacher paused and passed his hand across his forehead, as though to obliterate some painful reminiscence, and continued:

"But, I work not for this world. I have long since given up its pleasures, looking to the land where, as the good St. Paul says, we shall reap a bountiful reward."

Mr. Duffy insensibly felt a growing interest for his companion, whose pale, thoughtful physiognomy lit up with the enthusiasm of religion.

"And not only those," resumed the preacher, casting his eyes meekly towards the detective, "not only those cares, but something else. Ah, sir, there is a secret in every man's breast that he would, perhaps, never reveal." As the preacher said this he again regarded his companion attentively. The detetective's face was turned half aside—he made no reply.

The preacher continued.

"And you, sir, have you never too, felt any cankering care; or locked up in your heart's casket some dark, gloomy picture that you would fain conceal?"

The detective started and turned pale even through the paint on his cheeks.

"Why the question?" he asked almost fiercely.

"Your pardon," said the preacher, mildly. "I have unwittingly touched a tender spot; but your face, sir, it looked so like——"

"How like, what mean you?" exclaimed Duffy, moving back in surprise and even anger, but perceiving his companion appeared hurt, he added more softly:

"I meant not to be harsh, but wherefore the question?"

"Because," said the preacher, "you look so sorrowful; yet not sorrowful, either; I read in your face something that has happened that you would like to suppress if you could; pardon me again." He paused abruptly for the detective's face was buried in his hands, and his head bowed down, as though convulsed with some internal agony.

"Go on," he murmured, faintly.

"It looks," continued the preacher, "as though you were tortured with a fiend that never left you—that watched you when you slept, followed you when awake, breathed in your ear revenge for some fancied wrong, or"—he did not finish, for the old man suddenly raised himself up, and looked the speaker full in the eyes.

His face seemed transformed from the countenance of a human being to something unreal and awful. There was so much agony, grief, despair and rage resting on every lineament, that the preacher involuntarily shrank back and uttered a low cry.

"Stop, my poor fellow, I have frightened you," said Duffy, catching him by the arm, and restraining him as he was about to rise; "I mean no bodily harm to you; be seated, and listen: I am not," continued the detective, with a hurried glance around the room as he spoke—"I am not what I seem. You have deemed my manners wild and strange. I feel that I have unintentionally alarmed you, but your observations brought back passions that ought not to be read or traced on this face, and yet I fear they are too palpable."

"Others might not notice it as I have," observed the preacher.

"True, others might not, but you, I see, can read the face well."

"Then I am right," said the preacher, sadly.

"Right," repeated the other; "why ask that question; you have read more of my history than I could have ever wished."

"Alas! it must be a sad history," said the preacher.

"It is," rejoined the other, solemnly; "some time, perhaps, I may tell you, but not now—not now."

The old man paused, overwhelmed by his feelings; the candle had burnt out, and the fitful flashes of the burning embers gave a lurid gleam around. Bolt upright the preacher sat in the same position, his face so ghastly pale that one would have thought it the countenance of the dead.

The old man noticed the deathly pallor of his companion's cheeks; his eyes seemed riveted with a vacant stare on the opposite wall.

"You are sick," said he, partly rising; "the fatigue and excitement that you have gone through have been too much for you."

"It is gone," muttered the preacher to himself; then recovering his self-possession, he said, with a feeble smile—

"Only a slight qualm; it is over now."

"I am needlessly depriving you of your rest," said the detective.

"No, no," replied the preacher, "I am better now, and many thanks for your sympathy. It is not often I meet with one so kind as yourself; hard fare and bad treatment have not made me insensible to attentions."

"Where do you propose going to-morrow?" inquired Mr. Duffy. "You've lost your horse, and it is a long distance to the nearest town."

"The Lord will be my guide," said the preacher, crossing his hands with resignation.

"Never mind," rejoined Mr. Duffy, kindly, "you shall go with me. I have a horse and chaise—it is large enough for us both."

"I accept the offer with gratitude," said the preacher; "your generosity affects me: you go in the morning?"

"As early as dawn," replied Duffy; "I must be off as soon as possible." A brief pause ensued.

"This is a lonely place," remarked the preacher, stirring the fire, for its expiring embers were already casting deep shadows around the apartment.

"Lonely enough; such a place as I fancy might be the rendezvous of villainy," replied the old man, thoughtfully. "Do you know," continued he lowering his voice to a whisper, "that there is something about this house and its inmates that I do not like."

"Indeed," exclaimed the preacher, with surprise.

"Yes, wait one moment and I will tell you,"—the detective arose and cautiously bolted the door; after listening a few seconds, to assure himself the movement was unnoticed outside, he returned to his seat. "I believe," said he, speaking low and earnestly, "that this is a den of some kind—the innkeeper is honest looking enough but as I was passing to this room——"

"Whisper lower or we may be overheard," interrupted the other excitedly, and in a tone so different that the detective involuntarily paused.

"Ha!" whispered Duffy, "never mind *me*; you see as I was passing to this room, I caught sight through a little crevice, which the deuse himself would have hardly seen through, a dozen dark looking scoundrels, one of whom I am certain I have met before—don't be alarmed, I may be mistaken in their character."

"Do *you* not feel afraid," asked the preacher.

"No, I am used to these things," rejoined the detective, with a smile. "See," he added, pulling out two revolvers, "these are modern inventions; invaluable as they are, their use is not generally known or appreciated. There will be a time when even scoundrels will know their value. With them," continued the detective, "I am more than a match for a score of desperadoes."

"You think there is danger, then," observed the preacher.

"No immediate danger, I apprehend," replied the other, as he returned the pistols to their hiding-place. "I have made arrangements to remain in this room, preferring to sleep on a bench rather than trust myself in a chamber that I know nothing about. The door, as you see, has a good bolt, and I think you had better remain also. You will be safe enough."

"You think me a coward," said the preacher, smiling.

"Prudence is not cowardice," remarked the other. "There are times when the bravest quail; our nerves have more to do with that than you imagine; but, surely, you do not intend to risk yourself anywhere else?"

"I do," said the preacher, quietly; "the innkeeper pointed out my room, and by this time it is ready. I should judge it safe."

"Very well, if you will go," observed the detective, "examine your apartment carefully before you retire; ascertain whether it has a good, strong bolt; make sure there is nobody under your bed, and look out especially for trap-doors and sliding-panels."

"I will take a careful look, and if anything justifies suspicion I shall return," rejoined the preacher. "Good night."

He extended his hand, and it was warmly grasped by the detective.

"I will see you in the morning," said he; "remember, my vehicle is at your service as far as I go. Good night."

The preacher again expressed his grateful acknowledgments for the kindness of his friend, and with another cordial press of his hand, gathered up his saddlebags and cloak, and silently retired.

As the door closed on himself, the Tomtit (for it was he) gave a low, derisive laugh.

"Fool," he muttered between his clenched teeth, "I have you now—I have you now."

CHAPTER III.

The Burglars' Nest was well named.

Situated in one of the loneliest and most inaccessible parts of Pennsylvania, its existence was hardly known; few travellers stopped there, and some of those that did were never heard from again, so little could be told.

Rugged and steep was the way that led to it, with here and there a frightful ravine to break the gloomy expanse of giant trees and tangled shrubbery, that lined the road for miles.

The structure itself was a venerable wood building, evidently built during the Revolutionary War, though for what purpose could hardly be conceived, in so wild and unfrequented a portion of the country. Twenty-five years ago the tourist, in his woodland rambles, might have often met with mysterious looking habitations, long untenanted, which to the country people had a ghostly prestige; where spectral lights could be seen at night, and unearthly noises were heard during the day; of which a variety of dark stories could be told, terrible to children's ears, and listened to even by the stranger with vague horror.

These old abodes were perhaps some former tavern, where dreadful murders were said to have been perpetrated, still haunted by the troubled spirits of the victims; the sign swinging mournfully in the wind, and the door broken from its hinges, from which issued the reptile, and its companion, the owl, screeching its melancholy song during the night.

Such was the general character of the old "half-way" houses and "Boar Heads" of olden time, but the Burglars' Nest, though of undoubted antiquity, had no such ghostly stories to relate, or such gloomy occupants to acknowledge. Now and then something dark and tragical would take place, but there were no ghosts to vex the actors in the bloody scene, save their own disordered fancies. As for company, when the Burglars were there, everything was social and lively enough, and, as Mr. Beg opined, a little more so than was necessary.

The former occupants of the Nest were an old couple, who, having mysteriously disappeared, left the Tomtit to take quiet possession without the trouble and expense of questions asked, and monthly rent to pay. The place was fitted up as a tavern according to the suggestion of the Burglar Chief, and Mr. Beg obtained the appointment of custodian of the same, receiving as a recompense for his services a share in the yearly profits of the trade, which, as that gentleman sagaciously observed, "was a very good thing when it paid." But, as the old novels say, let us resume the thread of our story.

"Vell, it's mean, that's vot it is!" ejaculated Dick Hatton, with an oath, the moment his leader had left the room, as narrated in our introductory chapter. "Vunce wos ther time ther Tomtit would 'ave broken 'is 'ed afore he'd let sich game slip, but blast my peepers, he's gettin' dummy."

There was a general grunt of approval from the burglars at this expression of Mr. Hatton's views, who rendered them more emphatic by bringing his brawny fist on the table with tremendous violence.

"Couldn't we perwail on him?" inquired Molecat, mixing a whiskey toddy, and swallowing it at a breath.

"Perwail on the Tomtit?" repeated Dick, contemptuously. "Oh, yes, yer kin perwail on him."

Mr. Hatton thereupon winked in a sarcastic and significant manner, indicating that if the Tomtit could be prevailed upon, it would be altogether a singular and unprecedented circumstance.

"You can't come the double shuffle on him," spoke another; "when his mind is made up, it's made."

"I tell yer vot, boys," said Dick, causing his right eye to wink again knowingly "there aint no use to perwail on the Tomtit, but it comes to my mind ther thing might be done vithout perwailing!"

The burglars gazed hard at each other at this bold speech, but it was easy to see that the sentiment was not wholly unpopular.

"How yer going to manage it?" asked several at once.

"Vell, afore that's told, yer must swear yer won't peach to ther Tomtit."

Mr. Hatton thereupon took out a dirty copy of the New Testament.

The burglars hesitated; inflamed with liquor, and irritated by the decision of their chief, they nevertheless feared the consequences of engaging in an undertaking unsanctioned by him. Amongst them, Tomtit was regarded with a feeling even amounting to superstitious veneration. His knowledge of character, his cool, indomitable courage, and above all, his skill and daring in carrying out dangerous and hazardous schemes, had placed him instinctively at their head; they were accustomed to be led and directed by his superior judgment, as well as controlled by his fertile and powerful mind; they, therefore, had some reason to pause ere taking a step so decidedly against his declared purpose.

"Vell," said Dick, impatiently, "vot's ther matter now? Vot makes you all look so werry mum for?"

"It's a purty nice plan," observed Molecat, scratching his head thoughtfully, "perwided the thing can be done 'andsomely; but the boys, you see, are afeard the Tomtit might get vind of the matter."

"How's the Tomtit going to know?" interrupted a short, burly villain, who had hitherto maintained a profound silence.

Every eye was turned to the speaker. Next to the chief himself, none wielded so powerful an influence over his associates as Mr. Snag. Mr. Snag was the oldest member of the gang, and had formerly been a pirate by profession; but finding that business more dangerous than profitable, he joined himself to the fortunes of Tomtit, lost an eye in his service, and soon acquired the reputation of a bold and intrepid burglar.

Mr. Snag seldom spoke, but when he did, he was listened to with attention, it being a principle of that gentleman never to say anything unless he felt like it, or deemed the subject worth talking about.

"I say, how's the Tomtit going to know?" repeated Mr. Snag, taking his cigar from his mouth, and regarding his companions with an air of defiance. "Dick's right, and blow me if you all aint as ready for the game as he or I. Where's your pluck, eh?"

"Vun-eyed Snag, yer a trump, that's vot yer are," rejoined Mr. Hatton, gleefully. "Now, boys, smack this ere book, and then we'll perceed to business."

The oath was accordingly administered in due form, and their glasses having been replenished with liquor, Mr. Dick Hatton, after satisfying himself that no one was eavesdropping, lowered his voice and said—

"In ther fust place we must be mum afore Beg."

"Good," said several voices. "Beg shan't know it."

"My adwice," continued Mr. Hatton, "is to make out to ther old 'oman that we start to-morrow arter game, vich vill please ther old 'oman, of course; then give ther Tomtit ther slip; 'ed off the feller, and smash in 'is daylight in short order."

"Werry good," said Mr. Molecat, approvingly. "It was a remark o' vun of my old pals that ven a thing was quickly done it was vell done."

"That being got through vith," continued Dick, "it's easy enough to 'ide ther body. Let vun-eyed Snag alone for that."

"Well said, Dick," interrupted that gentleman, nodding his head in acknowledgment of the compliment; "but how will you get rid of the team?"

"I'll manage that," chimed in another burglar. "I'll drive it to the peak and tumble it over the rocks."

"Vell, then," pursued Dick, "arter that's done then comes ther spoils. I'm thinking, boys," added he, with a cunning twinkle in his eye, "that ther Tomtit doesn't care no vay, long as the thing's done quiet."

"Wot about the spoils?" inquired Mr. Snag.

"Vy, Beg knows more 'uv that than he lets on," replied Dick. "It comes to my mind there's a power 'uv money in ther old cove's bag."

It was curious to see how the burglars' eyes sparkled at the mention of the carpet bag of Mr. Detective Duffy, which they now firmly believed contained a treasure. But for Tomtit's controlling influence they would have dispatched that gentleman at once, without much form or ceremony. They thirsted for his blood, too, as the tiger longs for his victim.

"Ven he set ther bag down," continued Dick, examining his companions' faces to watch the effect of his remarks, "Beg says it chinked, and blow me if ther Tomtit doesn't know more about it than he lets on."

"Vot makes the Tomtit so contrary?" asked Mr. Molecat.

"Vy, nobody knows," replied Dick. "Next veek we wisit ther old cove in Philidelphia, and maybe he's got 'is mind on that."

"He was a saying," observed Mr. Molecat, "that it wos a werry bad move to raise the vind on small tops."

"Vot's that got to do vith it?" rejoined Dick, angrily. "Ther Tomtit is werry nice all at vunce, but—Hi! there——" Mr. Hatton's quick ears detected approaching footsteps, and giving the sign to his companions, he changed his tone to one of drunken jocularity, and commenced humming a tune, beating time on the table.

Mr. Beg entered very hastily.

"Look here, my cronies, this noise won't do. I've got another cove here, and if you keep such a racket——"

"Got another cove?" exclaimed they all in a breath.

"Just so," replied Mr. Beg, carelessly. "It's a parson. He lost his horse over the peak, and came near tumbling over himself. Blow my eyes, if he aint a poor 'un!"

"Poor vun!" replied Mr. Hatton, in a tone that expressed anything but satisfaction. "Vot's set 'im coming here for anyhow?"

"Ask him yourself," said Mr. Beg, with some asperity. "I told you he's lost his pony. He aint worth picking, if you set your mind on that."

"Vell, I should like to know," rejoined Mr. Hatton, with a frightful imprecation, "vot's set 'im coming 'ere for? Vere's ther Tomtit?"

Mr. Beg replied evasively that the Tomtit had "gone to snooze." "I'm going myself," added he, "for it's hard on to midnight."

"Beg," called Dick, as that gentleman turned to leave the room, "tell that old 'oman 'uv yourn that ther boys go arter game to-morrow, so she needn't perwide us any vituals. If ther Tomtit misses us, he'll find it out 'imself. Blast my peepers!" continued Dick, as Mr. Beg vanished, "he'd perwent us that if he could."

The burglars grinned, and puffed silently at their cigars.

"Vot yer going to do vith ther parson, boys?" inquired Dick, suggestively.

"Let him slide," said one.

"I wos going to hobserve," put in Mr. Molecat, "that that wos my opinion. Parsons are werry troublesome to get rid 'uv, and ven you make vay vith 'em, ten to vun they don't bother you artervard."

"Vell, vot's he doing here?" interrupted Dick. "Vot's ther tother fellow doing here too? Vy, ther Nest hasn't been wexed vith so many wisitations for years and years. It looks werry bad." Mr. Hatton thereupon shook his head gloomily, and lit a fresh cigar.

The night was now gradually wearing on, and the burglars, under the somnific influence of tobacco and whiskey, were already giving signs of drowsiness.

Mr. Snag had long since dropped asleep, having, with characteristic regard for his own comfort, selected the warmest side of the hearth. Mr. Molecat shortly followed his example, and lay snoring under the table, with his cigar in his mouth. The rest, after some very weak attempts to listen to Mr. Dick Hatton, dropped off, leaving that individual in the midst of a long dissertation on the degeneracy of the Tomtit.

"Snooze avay, lazy bones," muttered he, surveying them with a scornful glance; his ugly countenance looked even demoniacal, peering out from the cloud of smoke that hung around the room. There stood the table, as it stood at the commencement of the evening, with the eatables, bottles and glasses scattered about. The candles had one by one burnt away, and left a long trail of grease, which dripped even on the upturned faces of the sleepers. Throwing another log on the fire, Dick seated himself in a more comfortable position, and gave way to deep and earnest contemplation. Next to himself Dick loved money, and when a probability was presented of obtaining it, he seldom stopped to consider the risk incurred, or the policy of the undertaking. The plot he had hatched occupied his mind, and banished all thoughts of sleep. As he sat, gazing on the flickering embers, a new idea gradually unfolded in his brain; it expanded, and grew more definite, till his ugly features lit up with a grin of triumph. He turned round, and looked at his companions. Some still moved, and he continued quietly to puff at his cigar till a half hour had elapsed, and he felt sure that all were sound asleep. Then slowly rising, he glided softly out of the room; he paused cautiously in the passage and listened—nothing could be heard but the ticking of the clock, and his own half-suppressed breathing.

At the further end of the entry was a small closet; he groped his way easily there, and after a short search succeeded in finding a dark lantern. This was lit, the slide carefully closed, and the burglar, with stealthy, cat-like pace, proceeded in the direction of the Detective's room.

Not many months before, he had accidentally discovered the existence of a secret entrance to this apartment, which he believed was unknown to the Tomtit and his confederates. The matter had been carefully kept to himself, and now it would prove of use to him.

By the aid of his lantern the burglar soon found and touched a spring. The panel flew open, revealing an opening large enough to admit a man in a stooping posture. Beyond that was another. Carefully closing the first, he crept on—one movement more, and he would be in the Detective's room. The panel was noiselessly drawn aside, when the burglar suddenly shrank back in mute surprise, and stood trembling at the entrance with silent horror.

There stood the Tomtit, with his back turned, almost close to the startled burglar. In one hand he held a lantern, in the other a picture which he was earnestly gazing upon. If the subordinate could have looked on the face of the chief at that moment, he would have been still more surprised; the fierce, dark countenance, furrowed by numberless marks and scars, seemed transformed; the eyes no longer gleamed with ferocity, but were softened in a look of tenderness that illuminated every feature with an expression half remorseful, and singularly feminine.

The picture was the miniature of a female face eminently beautiful; the light brown hair, blue eyes and innocent, expressive features must have delineated a girl that had barely seen sixteen summers; a smile lingered on the ivory prototype, as though caught involuntarily by the artist; a smile so full of life, buoyancy, hope and joy, as might have inspired the beholder with sympathetic feeling.

The burglar chief, with the lantern still raised, contemplated the face a few moments, then slowly advanced towards the bench where the detective lay buried in profound slumber; as he gazed on the form of the sleeping old man, his countenance gradually resumed its cold, hardened expression.

"If," said he, speaking unconsciously half aloud, "he had kept himself away from the Nest I might spared his life, but he has sealed his own doom; years might banish hate; love might die away, but—" he paused and looked at the miniature again, and this time with a cold, repulsive indifference; "it matters not," muttered he, returning the picture to the old man's pocket, "I shall pursue my course; even phantoms shall not frighten me from"—he paused again, and instinctively gazed at the opposite wall—"fool," continued the burglar chief with a malignant scowl at the sleeper; "what mad destiny directed you here? poor fly, you are already entangled in the web's meshes; have you been pursuing me for years, only to fall in my power; and now PHILIP MANDON"—the burglar chief, who in the earnestness of his thoughts had spoken half aloud, suddenly stopped, for his practiced ear caught the sound of Dick's frightened breathing. Afraid to retreat, afraid almost to move, that villain had remained in the same position.

In one moment Tomtit's lantern was extinguished and all was in profound darkness. The terrified wretch well knowing the character of his chieftain, and what he might expect, hastily scrambled out of the orifice, and quickly opening the secret door, with the most inconceivable speed traced his way back to the room; his comrades were still snoring in harmonious concert; he threw himself down on the floor and counterfeited sleep; scarcely had he closed his eyes when the door opened, and the Tomtit walked deliberately in. The fire yet continued to light up surrounding objects, and by its ruddy glow Tomtit examined the faces of the sleepers. Coming to Dick, who was apparently buried in deep slumber, he regarded him attentively; a peculiar expression flitted across his face as he did so—an expression that boded no good to that gentleman.

Whatever might have been his feelings or disposition at that particular moment, he proceeded no further, but left the room as quietly as he came.

Mr. Dick Hatton felt quite relieved when his leader had fairly retired, and congratulated himself on his having made a most fortunate escape; his thoughts reverted to the singular circumstances connected with it—meeting the Tomtit so unexpectedly—his wild and strange muttering to himself and the miniature—all these things seemed incomprehensible to the dull brain of Mr. Dick Hatton; to solve it was a mystery, a problem, which disturbed him not half as much as the reflection that he might be still suspected. After turning the matter in his mind over and over again, and coming to the point where he first started from, Mr. Dick Hatton wisely concluded the Tomtit must be in love, and thus thinking dropped asleep.

In the meanwhile the Tomtit had resumed his disguise, and had laid himself down for a brief repose. No one was so methodical when occupied as he; he systematized everything, and, though apparently reckless before his associates, nothing was done without the most careful and deliberate consideration.

He rested but two hours or more, then, instinctively waking up, shook himself, and looked at the clock. It was nearing four, and daylight was just dawning. He again took a careful survey of himself, made a few trifling alterations in his dress, and then proceeded to the Detective's room.

Mr. Duffy heard a soft knock.

"Who's there?" he asked, with his customary caution.

"Your servant," returned Tomtit, in a tone of humility that would have deceived his own followers.

The door was immediately unbolted.

"Good morning," quoth the Detective, rubbing his eyes; "I have slept well, and hope that you have been equally fortunate."

"I slept well also," replied the counterfeit, "without any unpleasant apprehensions; though your remarks, I must confess, did disturb me."

"I was wrong, after all," rejoined Duffy, striking a light; "it seemed to me that I had seen one of the men before; there was something familiar about his face—but more about that presently;" he went to his carpet-bag and took out a small package; "this," said he, "is our breakfast. By the by, we have no time to lose; at least, I have not."

"Is your business, then, so very urgent?"

"Very much so," answered the Detective, with a hasty glance at his watch and then at the clock. "It is high time the innkeeper was up; he was to harness my horse at five."

"As I was coming down I met him," returned Tomtit; "I guess your vehicle will be ready soon."

In a short time the truth of the observation was confirmed by the appearance of Mr. Beg, who looked very sleepy, very stupid, and uncommonly cross.

"All right," announced that worthy, with a frightful yawn, "the team's harnessed."

Mr. Beg glanced meaningly at the Tomtit, who returned the sign significantly.

The Detective, little dreaming of the true character of his companions, followed them into the open air. The morning was coming in damp and cool, and a slight fog obscured the gloomy expanse of forest.

"The air is chilly, wrap yourself well up," said Mr. Duffy, as he arranged the harness; "these Pennsylvania fogs are favorable to disease. Come, now."

They got into the vehicle and rode slowly down the hill; it was a steep, craggy descent, with sharp, jutting rocks scattered round on its uneven surface; few wheels had ever defiled along that narrow road.

"You have visited these parts before," remarked the counterfeit, with a cunning glance at his companion.

"Yes," returned the other, thoughtfully, "I have often been this way, but never knew before of the existence of that tavern. It is strange that a public house should be kept in so wild and unfrequented a portion of the country; travellers seldom pass by—it's a mystery."

"A mystery!" repeated Tomtit.

"Yes, a mystery. I have been thinking there is something about it that has an ugly, suspicious look."

"So you said last evening," rejoined the Tomtit.

"Since then my suspicions have been confirmed. Years ago," continued the Detective, "I heard of the existence of a place similar, as I should judge, to this, the rendezvous of an extensive association of burglars. For a long period Philadelphia has been the theatre of a series of daring, bold exploits by these fellows, who, so far, have succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the police, and indeed of the State government. Their leader is a man who unites the most consummate villainy with a reckless, intrepid spirit; having a great talent for personation and acting, he has contrived to accomplish the most unheard of exploits."

The Tomtit affected great interest.

"He must be a wonderful fellow, surely."

"He is a wonderful villain," replied Duffy, clenching his teeth, and at the same time giving the reins a violent jerk.

"Do you ever see him?" inquired the Tomtit, noticing, and even exulting, in his companion's agitation.

"See him," repeated the other, "see him;" he paused, and then, in a calmer tone, continued, "I have seen him; yes, many times." His lip quivered slightly. "I *have* seen him—he is a wretch, a scoundrel, a villain of the deepest dye, a——"

"Hush!" said the dissembler, softly. "These are harsh words to use, even of those who may deserve them; oft do we condemn without reflection, our prejudices leading us to violent extremes; but could we listen to the voice of reason and truth, how often would we repent of hasty judgment—how often would we recall these hasty views of character."

"But if we know them to be true," suggested the detective.

"If we know them to be so," rejoined the counterfeit, "that is different, though charity would make us more lenient. This man, you say, is truly bad?"

"I do; his infamous character is widely known. O," exclaimed he, with sudden energy, "would that I had him here! I'd tear him limb from limb."

"*Philip Mandon*," hissed a low voice by his side, "you have him here!—he is sitting by your side!"—and the Tomtit's knife pointed straight to the Detective's heart.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

INFLUENCE OF IMITATION.

In mechanical pursuits, a youth is put apprentice to learn an art, and is expected to attain it by copying his master; imitation is the principle on which he is to be instructed. Theory, however perfect, would not teach it him; he must practice the art to know it. On this principle, also, education ought to be conducted. Imitation is the leading propensity and strongest faculty of man; it is, therefore, the soul of education; it operates with a force and certainty which give the highest consequence to early impressions and pursuits. Does not a child imitate its parents? it speaks the language they speak. Do we not discriminate the different nations of Europe by their manners? If we go beyond the confines of Europe into Tartary, or China, or to any other state, imitation has made the people one family. If we descend from the broad line of national resemblance, to the pursuits and efforts of individuals, the same principle actuates and guides imitation, spreads its influence over every wish and every purpose: some one is ever in our view, whom we are emulous to equal. Society is bound together by this influence. Did each individual form his own habits, without a regard to those around him, a nation would be like an assemblage of foreigners, uninteresting to each other, because they would have nothing in common. Without imitation, science and the arts could never advance beyond their infancy; ever beginning, man, like the brute, would never excel those who had lived before him; but now, each one is animated to exertion by the example of others; the path they trod and made shorter by their labor is readily walked in; that which has been learned may be taught, and this supposes imitation.

LETTER OF A SOLDIER,

IN OUR REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

HARLAEM, *September 26th*, 1776.

Your precious letter, loving Wife,
Came safely to me here;
God keep you ever in his hand,
And all our children dear.
We've had a double taste of war,
To try our soldiers' stuff,—
They call the first a skirmish, though
I thought it grave enough.

We'd had a march of seven long miles,
While worn and wearied then,
They burst upon us from the wood,
Like lions from their den.
We stood our ground as best we might,
But they were fresh and strong—
Well-fed, and more then two to one,—
We could not stand it long.

From right to left, from left to right,
Their raking bullets fell,
But, worst of all, we had to yield—
With grief the truth I tell:
Surrounded on all sides, 'twere vain
To longer bide the fray;
We left some dead upon the field,
And so, thank God! did they.

Some lost their knapsacks, that contain'd
Of clothing all their store,
And what they'll do, 'tis hard to say,
When winter's at the door;
I've spared from my own slender stock—
For how could I withstand—
Some of the shirts and stockings, wife,
Made by your careful hand.

They've got old father Chamberlain—
Those British, proud and stern—
He who so loved his country's cause,
We fear he'll not return.
How sad, if in some prison-ship
His form should pine away,
And his white locks, revered at home,
Be of their scorn the prey.

Well, the next day they came again,
All fierce to seal our fate—
Monday, September the sixteenth—
That was the battle's date.
Our regiment was call'd in front,
And nobly stood at bay;
Full four long hours we fought them there,
And no one shrank away.

We boldly faced those red-coat men—
We fear'd no earthly powers;
My household musket did its best
In this strange work of ours.
But, best of all, they had to fly—
They vanish'd from our view;
And if they're valiant in the field,
They're swift at running, too.

Close at their heels, we drove them, wife,
For four long miles, and more;
They found the rebels had some pluck,
Though that they knew before.
They've kept their distance since that day,
And not annoyed us here;
But then, their troops have got New York,
And there they domineer.

Our dead men lay like broken trees
When wrecking whirlwinds frown;
No quarter those grim Hessians give—
They're hired to cut us down.
I got a wound, on hand and arm,
Yet scarcely felt the pain
Until our hard day's work was done,—
They're almost well again.

We have no covering save the skies,
But very soon, we're told,
That barracks will be built for us,
As nights grow sharp and cold.
My brother Andrew sends his love,—
God kept us from the dead,
When hissing balls flew thick and fast,
Like hailstones, round our head.

We talk of Oxford's pleasant vales,
And friends, and much-loved home,—
And hope to meet in comfort there,
When the right time shall come.
So ever let your prayers, my Wife,
With our young children's rise,
For us, and our dear Country's sakes,
To Him who rules the skies.

ANTHONY SIGOURNEY.

The above is almost a literal version of an epistle, preserved as a precious heir-loom by the descendants of Mr. Anthony Sigourney, who, with his brother Andrew, bravely and patriotically shared the hardships of our war of revolution. They were both natives of the beautiful town of Oxford, in Massachusetts, where their Huguenot ancestors settled, soon after the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, in 1685.

THE CLERK'S MARRIAGE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"You are a brave young man, or a very foolish one."

"Why do you say that?"

"To think of marriage."

"What has bravery or folly to do in the case?"

"The young lady is poor."

"I do not wed for money."

"There would be some hope for you if she were the possessor of twenty or thirty thousand dollars. But being as poor as yourself, the folly of this purpose stands out in bold relief. Look before you leap, my friend; there's trouble for you on the other side."

"I am not sordid, Mr. Blair." The young man's fine face glowed, and his eyes flashed with a repressed indignation.

"Not sordid enough, Adrian, for marriage, as society is now constituted. There are two sides to this question of marriage; the sentimental side, and the matter-of-fact side. Now, you have looked only at the sentimental side. Suppose we consider the matter-of-fact aspects. You are a clerk, receiving a salary of one thousand dollars. How much have you saved?"

"Nothing to speak of."

"Nothing! So much the worse. If it costs you a thousand dollars per annum to live, from whence is to come the means of supporting a wife and family?"

"Oh, I've been careless and wasteful in expenditure as most young men are. I had only myself to provide for, and was self-indulgent. But that will cease, of course."

"Granted, for argument sake. The young lady you propose to marry is named Rosa Newell."

"Yes."

"A charming young girl; well educated; finely accomplished; used to good society, as we say; and just suited for my friend Adrian, if she had money, or he an income of three or four thousand a year. But the idea of making her a happy wife, in the city of New York, on a thousand dollars, is simply preposterous. It can't be done, sir; and the attempt will prove ruinous to the happiness of both parties to so foolish an arrangement. It is a matter of the easiest demonstration, Adrian; and I wonder so good an accountant as you are, should not, ere this, have tried this question by mathematical rules. Let me do it for you. And, first, we will look at Rosa's present sphere of life. She has a home with Mr. Hart, an uncle, and is living in rather a luxurious way. Mr. Hart is a man who thinks a great deal of appearances, and maintains a domestic establishment that does not cost less than four thousand dollars a year. His house rent is equal to your whole salary. Now, in taking Rosa from this home, into what kind of a one can you place her?"

A sober hue of thought came over the young man's face.

"You cannot afford to rent a house at even one-half the cost of Mr. Hart's, even if you were able to buy furniture," continued Mr. Blair.

"We shall board, of course," said Adrian. "Housekeeping is not to be thought of in the beginning."

"If not in the beginning, how afterwards?"

The young man looked a trifle bewildered, but did not answer.

"What are you now paying for board?"

"Five dollars a week."

"You would require a parlor and bed-room after marriage?"

"Yes."

"At a cost of not less than fifteen dollars a week."

Adrian sighed.

"We could hardly afford the parlor."

"Hardly," said his friend. "Well, we give up the parlor, and take a pleasant front chamber on the second floor, at twelve dollars a week. But the house is not first class, nor the location very desirable. These are not to be had in New York at twelve dollars a week. You cannot afford for Rosa the elegancies of her present home. Three dollars more a week for washing and et ceteras, and your income is drawn upon at the rate of seven hundred and eighty dollars a year. Two hundred and twenty left for clothing and all other expenses! And, so far, it has taken nearly three times that sum to meet your own demands. It has a bad look, Adrian."

"I was wasteful and self-indulgent," replied the young man, in a voice from which the confident tone had departed. "It will scarcely cost Rosa and me for clothing one-half of what I expended."

"Say one-half, and your income will not reach the demand. What was your tailor's bill last year?"

"One hundred and sixty dollars."

"Say two hundred, including boots, hats, et cetera?"

"Yes."

"You could hardly get this below a hundred and fifty."

"Perhaps not."

The young man's voice was growing husky.

"That will leave seventy dollars for your wife's clothing, and nothing for pleasures, recreations, little luxuries, or unanticipated but unavoidable expenses. And if it be so with you two in good health, what will be the condition of things in sickness, and with children to support and educate. Adrian, my young friend, there is debt, embarrassment, disappointment, and a miserable life before you. Pause and retrace your steps before it is too late. If you love Rosa, spare her from this impending fate. Leave her in her pleasant home, or to grace that of a man better able than you are to provide her with the external blessings of life. You cannot marry on a thousand dollars a year, and it is folly to think of it."

"We could get boarding for ten dollars a week," said Adrian.

"That would scarcely help the matter at all. At best, it would only make a difference in the amount of your indebtedness at the close of each year. It is folly to think of it, my young friend. You can't afford to marry."

"It has a dark look, but there is no holding up now," replied Adrian, in a gloomy way. "We have mutually pledged each other, and the day of our marriage has been appointed."

"I'm sorry for you," said the friend, a bachelor of forty, who, on an income of fifteen hundred dollars a year, could see no possible chance for a happy marriage in the city of New York, and preferred celibacy to the embarrassments which he saw hundreds of his friends encounter in their attempts to live in a style out of all proportion to their resources. "I'm sorry for you," he repeated; "but if you will bend your neck to the yoke, you must not complain of the burden you find yourself compelled to bear."

Strange as it may appear, the young clerk, Henry Adrian, had never before looked this matter of income, expenditure, and style of living, fairly in the front. The actual aspect of the case, when clearly seen, threw his mind into a state of troubled bewilderment. He went over and over again the calculations suggested by Mr. Blair, a bookkeeper in the establishment where he was employed, cutting off a little from one proposed expenditure and another, but not being able to get the cost of living down to the range of his salary, except when the style was so far below that in which his wife must move, that he turned half sick from its contemplation. The more steadily he looked at the truth, the more heavily came the pressure of its stony weight upon his heart. To go forward was little less than madness, yet how could he hold back now?

Rosa sat alone, reading, in one of her uncle's handsome parlors, waiting for her lover. He was later than usual; so late that her book began to lose its interest, and at last lay closed on her lap, while a shade fell over her expectant face. A single glance at Rosa's countenance revealed the fact that she was a girl of some character. There was no soft, voluptuous languor about her, but an erectness of position as she sat, and a firmness of tone in all her features, that indicated an active mind, and self-reliance.

An hour later than usual, Adrian came.

"Are you sick, Henry?" asked Rosa, as she took his hand, and fixed her eyes on his sober face.

"Not sick, but troubled in mind," he replied without evasion.

"Why are you troubled, Henry?" And Rosa drew an arm tenderly around her lover.

"Sit down, and I will tell you. The trouble concerns us both, Rosa."

The young girl's face grew pale. They sat down close together, holding each other's hands. But in Adrian's countenance there was a resolute expression, such as we see in the countenance of a man who has settled a question of difficult solution.

"The day fixed for our marriage is only two months distant," he said. The tone in which he spoke chilled the heart of Rosa. She did not answer, but kept her gaze on his face.

"Rosa, we must re-consider this matter. We have acted without forethought."

Her face became paler, her lips fell apart, her eyes had a frightened expression.

"I love you, Rosa, tenderly, truly. My heart is not turning from you. I would hasten, rather than retard, the day of our marriage. But there are considerations beyond that day, which have presented themselves, and demand sober consideration. In a word, Rosa, I cannot afford to marry. My income will not justify the step."

The frightened look went out of Rosa's eyes.

"It was wrong in me ever to have sought your love."

Her hand tightened on his, and she shrank closer to his side.

"I am a clerk, with only a thousand dollars of income, and I do not see much beyond to hope for. Rosa, the furniture of these parlors cost twice the amount of my salary. The rent of the home in which you now live is equal to what I receive in a year. I cannot take you from all this elegance into a third-class boarding-house, the best my means will provide. No, no, Rosa, it would be unjust, selfish, wrong, cruel. How blind in me ever to have thought of so degrading the one I love!"

The young man was strongly agitated.

"And this is all that troubles you, Henry?"

"Is it not enough? Can I look at the two alternatives that present themselves, and not grow heart-sick? If we marry, what is before us? Humiliation, deprivation, and all the ills that poverty brings for you, and debt, trouble, and a lifelong embarrassment for me. If we separate, each taking different ways in life—oh, Rosa, Rosa, I am not strong enough to choose that alternative!"

And his form trembled under the pressure of excitement.

"You love me, Henry." The voice of Rosa was calm, yet burdened with feeling.

"As my own life, darling! Have I not said so a hundred times?"

"And even as my life do I love you, Henry."

For several moments her face lay hidden in his bosom. Then lifting it, Rosa said—

"I am glad you have spoken on this subject, Henry. I could not approach it myself, but, now that we have it before us, let it be well considered. Your income is one thousand dollars?"

"Yes."

"A sum large enough to supply all the real wants of two persons who have independence enough not to be enslaved by a mere love of appearances."

"Why, darling, it will require more than half of my salary to pay for respectable boarding."

"Taking it for granted that, after our marriage, I am to sit down in a boarding house, with hands folded, an idle dependent on your labor. But I shall not so construe my relation to my husband. I will be a helpmeet for him. I will stand by his side, sharing life's burdens."

"All that is in your heart, darling, I know," returned Adrian. "But we are hedged round by social forms that act as a hindrance. You cannot help me. Society will demand of us a certain style of living, and we must conform to it, or be pushed aside from all circles of refinement, taste and intelligence. I cannot accept this ostracism for you, Rosa. It is not right."

"As if a false, heartless world were more to me than a true, loving husband! Henry, the central point of social happiness is home; as the home is so will our lives be—rather let me say, as we are so will our homes be—centres of gloom or brightness. What others think of us is really of little account in making up the sum of our enjoyments as we pass through life; but what we are in ourselves is everything. We must be the centres of our own world of happiness, or our lives will be incomplete. Can a fine establishment like this, in which I live in weak dependence, fill the measure of my desires? Can it bring peace and contentment? No, no, Henry. The humblest apartments, shared with you, would be a palace to my soul instead. I am not speaking with the romantic enthusiasm of an ardent girl, but soberly, truthfully, Henry. No, dearest, we will not make our lives wretched by living apart, because we cannot make a fair appearance in other people's eyes. God has given us love for each other, and the means of happiness if we will use them. Let us take his good gifts in thankfulness. You have an income of one thousand dollars. We must not expect to live as those do who have two, or three, or four thousand dollars a year. Be that folly far from us, Henry! I am equal to the self-denial it will require, if the word 'self-denial' is to be used. Are not you also? Oh, Henry! is there any joy to be imagined beyond that which flows from the conjunction of two loving hearts? and shall pride and a weak spirit of social conformity come in to rob us of our blessing?"

The young man had come, sternly resolved to put off the day of marriage. He parted from his betrothed that night, looking forward with golden-hued hopes for its arrival. They had talked over the future, practically and sensibly. The lover's fond pride, which had looked to a fair social appearance for his young wife, gave place to a better view of things. He saw that his love had fixed itself upon a true woman, and that in the humbler sphere in which their lot was cast all attainable happiness was in store for them, if they would but open their hearts in an orderly way for its reception. One thing said to him by Rosa in that evening's talk we repeat, for the sake of young wives, or maidens on the eve of marriage.

"Be mine, dear Henry," she said, "the task of ordering and regulating our domestic affairs in conformity with your means. I will give all thought to that. Your income is fixed, and I shall know exactly the range of expenditure we must adopt. Do not fear debt and embarrassment. These wretched forms shall never enter your home, while I stand sentinel at the door. If the husband gives his life to care and work, shall not the wife do the same? If he provides to the best of his ability, shall not she dispense with wise frugality his earning? She that fails to do this, is not worthy of her position."

"And so you are bent on this folly?" said the bachelor clerk, on the day preceding that on which Adrian was to be married.

"Yes, if you choose to call it folly," was the answer.

"Where are you going? To Saratoga?"

"We shall go nowhere."

"What! Not make a bridal tour?"

"No. A clerk who only receives a salary of one thousand dollars can't afford to spend a hundred in making a bridal tour."

Mr. Blair shrugged his shoulders, and arched his eyebrows, as much as to say: "If I couldn't afford a bridal tour, I'd not marry."

On the day after Adrian's wedding, he was at his usual place in the counting-room. He received from his fellow clerks a few feeble congratulations. Most of them thought him a fool to burden himself with a wife not worth a dollar.

"When I marry I'll better my condition; not make it worse," was the unspoken thought of more than one.

"Where are you boarding?" asked Mr. Blair, indifferently, two or three weeks after Adrian's marriage.

"No where," was replied. "We are at housekeeping."

"What!"

"At housekeeping."

"What is your rent?"

"Two hundred dollars, and half of that my wise, good little wife is to pay in music lessons to our landlady's daughters. We have two pleasant rooms in a third story. I furnished these with the money it would have taken for the usual bridal tour. Rosa has the use of the kitchen, and insists on doing her own cooking and housework for the present. I demurred, and do demur; but she says that 'work is worship,' if performed conscientiously and dutifully as she is performing it. And, with all this, we are very happy, Mr. Blair, as you shall witness. To-morrow you must go home with me, take tea and spend the evening."

Mr. Blair accepted the invitation. He had met Rosa, occasionally, before her marriage, and knew her to be a bright, accomplished young woman, fitted to move in refined and intelligent circles, and he felt some curiosity to see her in the new position of mistress and maid to her own household. The Third Avenue cars bore the two men a long, long way from the city's throbbing heart, out to the more quiet exteriors where they alighted, and after a short walk, entered a modest looking house with well tended shrubbery in the little front garden. To the third story they ascended, and there the young wife met them. Not blushing and with stammering apologies for their poor home; but with such ease and sweet self-possession—with such a happy light in her eyes, and such loving smiles about her lips—that Mr. Blair felt himself all at once transferred to an earthly paradise. As soon as time came for observation, he took note of what was around him.

The furniture of the room into which he had been ushered, could scarcely have been plainer. In the centre, stood a small breakfast table, covered with a snowy cloth, and set for three persons. Four cane-seat chairs, a work stand, a hanging shelf for books, a mantle ornament or two of no special value, an ingrain carpet on the floor, and plain white curtains looped back with blue ribbons, made up the complete inventory. No, not the complete inventory; for there was a piano against the wall; the dark case and plain style of which showed it to be no recent purchase. The instrument had been Rosa's as the observant visitor correctly inferred.

After a pleasant talk of some minutes, Rosa left the room, and not long after returned, bearing a tray on which were tea, toast, butter, biscuit, cold tongue and sweetmeats. There was a beautiful glow on her face as she entered, but nothing of shame or hurt pride. With her own fair hands she arranged the table, and then took her place at the head, to serve her husband and his friend.

The heart of Mr. Blair glowed and stirred with a new impulse as he looked into the pure, sweet, happy face of the young wife, as she poured the tea, and served the meal which she had prepared.

After supper, Rosa removed the tea things, and was absent nearly half an hour. She returned through her chamber, which adjoined their little parlor, breakfast and sitting room, all in one, with just the slightest change in her attire, and looking as fresh, happy and beautiful, as if entering a drawing room filled with company. The evening passed in reading, music, and pleasant conversation. As Mr. Blair was about retiring, Adrian said:

"Do you think, now, that we were fools to marry?"

Rosa stood with her hand drawn within one arm of her husband, and clasped; and with a face radiantly happy.

A shade crept over Mr. Blair's countenance.

"No, not fools, but wise, as others might be, if they were only courageous enough to do as you have done. Mrs. Adrian," and he took the young wife's hand, "I honor your bravery, your independence, your true love that cannot be overshadowed by worldliness, that mildew of the heart, that blight on our social life. You are a thousand times happier in your dutiful seclusion, than any fashion-loving wife, or slave to external appearance, can ever be."

"I love my husband, and I live for him." Rosa leaned closer to the manly form by her side. "I understood, when we married, that he was a life-toiler; that our home would be established and sustained by the work of his hands; and I understood as well that I was not his superior, but only his equal, and that if it was right and honorable for him to work, it could be no less right and honorable for me. Was I to sit idle, and have a servant to wait on me, when his was a lot of toil? No—no—no! I had my part to perform as well as he, and I am performing it to the best of my ability."

"You are a true woman, a wise woman, a good woman," said Mr. Blair, with ardor; "and you will be as happy as you deserve to be. I thought Henry a fool to marry on a thousand dollars, and told him so. But I take back my words. If such women as you were plentiful, we could all marry, and find our salaries ample. Good-night, and may God bless you!"

And the bachelor clerk, who could not afford to marry on fifteen hundred dollars a year, went to his lonely home—lonely, though peopled thickly—and sitting down in his desolate chamber, dreamed over the sweet picture of domestic felicity he had seen, and sighed for a like sweet hiding-place from the world, and all its false protection and heartless show.

STRANGE TASTES IN ANIMALS.

It is singular to find that while in animals each peculiar species has its distinguishing characteristic—as speed in the greyhound, courage in the bull-dog, intelligence in the shepherd's colley, and acuteness in the Highland terrier—that there are now and again strange aberrations met with in their tastes, and such as are totally opposed also to natural habits and dispositions. A Frenchman once had a poodle which would drink grog until he got drunk; but in his latter days he became reformed, for a stupid scoundrel giving him a glass of undiluted whiskey, scalded his mouth, and from that moment he turned a teetotaller. Many years ago, in England, a guinea-hen, which had lost her partner, took to fox-hunting to kill grief. She regularly went to a field with the pack, kept a respectable place throughout the day, and always was in at the death.

A BOTTLE CONJURER.

An Irish gentleman, sojourning at a dashing hotel, felt much annoyed at the smallness of the bottles, considering the high price of wine. One evening, taking his glass with a friend in the coffee-room, the pompous owner came in, when the gentleman, after apologizing, told him he and his friend had laid a wager, which he must decide, by telling him what profession he was bred to. Mine host, after some hesitation at the question, answered that he was bred to the law. "Then," said the gentleman, "I have lost, for I laid that you were bred a packer." "A packer, sir!" said the host, swelling like a turkey-cock; "what could induce you, sir, to think I was bred a packer?" "Why, sir," said the other, "I judged so from your *wine measures*, for I thought no one but a *skillful packer* could put a *quart* of wine into a *pint* bottle."

SINGULAR INCIDENT IN A MADHOUSE.

A mother and daughter (emigrants) both became inmates of a lunatic hospital in this State, at different dates, and were placed in the same story of the building, where they had access to the same hall. They met, and recognized each other, though one had left the other years ago in Ireland. They had each crossed the ocean, become residents in New York, and lost all knowledge of the other's history or fate; both became bereft of reason, and in a madhouse, surrounded by those who were hopelessly insane, the child and parent met; though reason was dethroned, and they were there with minds diseased, yet nature triumphed over the clouded intellect, and for a brief moment they conversed on the land of their birth, and of their separation.

ACROSTIC,

Descriptive of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Watch-tower of Ptolemy.
Olympian Jupiter's statue.
Nebuchadnezzar's gardens in Babylon.
Diana's Temple, at Ephesus.
Egyptian Pyramids.
Rhodes, its Colossus.
Sepulchre of Mausoleus, King of Caria.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

IF we form an extensive acquaintance and numerous familiarities, we set open our gates to the invaders of nearly our whole time. We expose our lives to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinences, the very thought of which would make a wise man tremble.

THE last best fruit which comes to late perfection, even in the kindliest soul, is tenderness toward the hard, forbearance toward the unforbearing, warmth of heart toward the cold, philanthropy toward the misanthropic.

THE heart of man is older than his head. The first-born is sensitive but blind—his younger brother has a cold, but all-comprehensive glance. The blind must consent to be led by the clear-sighted if he would avoid falling.

IT is hard to personate and act a part long; for where Truth is not at the bottom, Nature will always be endeavoring to return, and will peep out and betray herself one time or other.

THERE are a good many people in the world who spend half their time in thinking what they *would* do if they were rich, and the other half in conjecturing what they *shall* do as they are not.

A young lady should often maintain a prudent reserve and silence in the presence of her lover; he will be certain to fancy her a great deal wiser than she can show herself by her talk.

BEFORE an affliction is digested, consolation ever comes too soon; there is but one mark between these two, as fine almost as a hair, for a comforter to take aim at.

AN old bachelor, who is afraid of the expense of marriage, might find it advantageous to consider whether it isn't less expensive to maintain a brood of children than a brood of vices.

EVERY young lady would fain be a sort of Mecca of beauty, or Medina of charms, for young men, ardent devotees of love, to make their pilgrimages to.

THE less a man knows, the wider he wears his mouth open. It is as impossible for a fool to keep his jaws shut as it is for a sick oyster to keep his shell closed.

A PRETTY woman's soul sometimes sits and looks out through a bright eye like a purring cat out of a sunny window.

WHEN you kiss a wily and beautiful coquette you "put an enemy to your mouth to steal away your brain."

IT is only the inattention of learned women to the duties of their situation, that makes the phrase "blue-stocking" one of such stinging reproach.

THE chords of a woman's heart should, like a wind-harp, be sweetly musical, but not, like a wind-harp, give out its kisses and love-tones to all winds alike.

IF a bad man proposes a league between you and himself, tell him you would much rather the distance should be *several* leagues.

WHEN the heart is still agitated by the remains of a passion, we are more ready to receive a new one than when we are entirely cured.

WHEN a man has once forfeited the reputation of his integrity, he is set fast, and nothing will serve his turn—neither truth nor falsehood.

WHATEVER is necessary to be done *can* be done; Nature is too wise and too beneficent to yoke necessity with impossibility.

MANY a flatterer likens a lady's singing to the notes of a dying swan when at heart he almost wishes her in the poor bird's condition.

SOME men's lives are pretty respectable in the beginning and the middle, but, like an ill-worn shoe, run down at the heel.

A FARMER should not bet his money, but he may, if he thinks best, *stake his land*.

MOST men seem to be very poor mathematicians; they are never able to figure beyond No. 1.

SOLITUDE isn't half so much worse than good company as it is better than bad.

AVOID through life the company of reptiles; you will have enough of them in the grave.

THOSE who best know how to value friends, best know how to get along without them.

THEY say that marriage makes two one. But it generally makes them half-a-dozen or more.

IF we were always conscious of meriting men's good opinions, we should care less for their ill ones.

THERE are none so low but they have their triumphs. Small successes suffice for small souls.

MANY writers have nothing to say, and the number of words they say it in is astonishing.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A WISCONSIN physician being awakened one night not long since by a burglar who was trying to break into his house, loaded a pistol with powder and pills (having no bullets), and gave the intruder a dose which sent him howling from the premises.

A LADY was burnt to death in Rochester, a short time since, by the bursting of a burning fluid-lamp she was filling; and the coroner's jury that sat on the inquest passed a series of resolutions calling upon the Legislature to prohibit the use of that substance.

A RAT-CATCHER got into a fight with a horde of rats in a large sewer one night recently, and was bitten severely on his legs, hands and face; the bites seem to have been poisonous, and the wounds swelled to such a degree as to be truly frightful.

A SAILOR, just arrived in port, met an old foe in South street one morning recently, and without saying a word, drew his knife and gave him a stab in the side which it was thought would prove fatal. The offender was soon caught and locked up.

A LONDON paper says that a piece of land was lately sold in that city at the rate of one million and nine hundred thousand dollars an acre, which would be about enough to cover the land all over with a coat of silver of the thickness of a half-dollar.

AN employee in the Fulton Iron Works at Lancaster, Pa., lost his eye recently by its being struck by a piece of iron which flaked off from a turning lathe that was rapidly revolving.

A CALIFORNIA paper, in giving an account of a suicide whose body was found in the woods where it had been *hanging by the neck five days*, carefully adds that "life was extinct."

A LADY named Mrs. Traynor, living near Kingston, C. W., while attempting recently to save her child, that had fallen into the lake, from drowning, fell into the water and was drowned herself.

A CITIZEN of Washington, who was usually a most temperate person, went on a spree one night not long ago, and was found dead in the gutter the next morning.

A MAN addicted to habitual drunkenness, living in New Bedford, was arrested one morning, during a sober interval, for stealing two hens the night before, and hung himself in a fit of despair.

A MOST wretched-looking young girl was found dead in the street in New Orleans, one night not long ago; she had evidently died from want and intoxication.

A WOMAN in Cincinnati, whose reputation is said by the papers of that city to be so bad that it would be impossible to make it worse, recently cowhided a man in the street, for *trying* to injure her name.

A MAN named Valentine Haupt, living in New Albany, Ind., having refused to associate with Lewis Kitner, the latter drew a knife and stabbed Haupt to the heart.

A RESPECTABLE married woman hung herself in Providence, one day recently, on account of her husband's business reverses.

SEVERAL rowdy boys got into a quarrel in Cherry street, one evening a short time since, and one of them had his face beaten to a mere bloody mass.

A WOMAN named Mary McLane, living in a miserable hut in Albany, perished one night recently of cold and drunkenness.

A FRENCH Canadian was so cruelly beaten in a row in Montreal not long since, that he died of his injuries the next day.

A MAN named Dillon, living in New Orleans, in a fit of insane jealousy shot his wife and then took a dose of poison.

DURING the present year, nearly six millions of quarts of milk have been sent from Orange county to this city and Brooklyn.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1861.

OUR ONLY TERMS.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free.* Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. ☞ We employ no travelling agents.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue, it it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

NO TRAVELLING AGENTS.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act as such you can put him down as a swindler.

THE BLUES.

We take issue with the poet who says, "man was made to mourn." To be continually, or even frequently, in the dumps, is bad philosophy and worse theology. The woe-begone individual who insists that this is a world of misery, torture and wrong, libels the Beneficent Being who made it and him, and misuses his own gifts while he slanders the Giver.

Stocks go down and the skies are black to Gripus, who speculated for a rise; but to Touchpenny, who operated for a fall, they are bright and glorious. To the Christian philosopher they are never wholly dark. He sees the silver lining through the cloud, and the shadows before him give him comfortable assurance that the sun is at his back. When people talk of having the blues, of being in despair, and all that sort of thing, the inference is that something is the matter either with their consciences, or their digestive apparatus. If the latter, exercise, diet and regimen will change the color of their thoughts; if the former, there is "balm in Gilead" and a "physician there." We have little sympathy with any man who suffers himself to be prostrated by pecuniary loss, and still less with him who succumbs to the anticipation of it. Such a man distrusts both himself and God. While he prates of panic, he is himself its contemptible embodiment. What! give up and wilt down under misfortune, and especially in a country like this, where every energetic man's brain is a bank, and there is a certain income derivable from every toiler's thews and muscles! The idea is monstrous! The prolific earth cries shame upon it. True manhood laughs it to scorn.

Despair is not excusable even in those who are inhibited from all useful occupations by the dispensations of Providence. Not even the sick, the crippled and the blind are justified in considering their fate insupportable. There are ten good Samaritans to every Levite in this generous land, and when did disabled and helpless honesty appeal to American hearts for succor in vain!

Unless a man has lost the "immediate jewel of his soul," his character, he has no cause for despair, however poor. Even in that case, although of all losses the loss of reputation is the most difficult to retrieve, reform is still possible, and the backslider who sets about the work in earnest will find encouragement and material aid as he goes along.

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SHORT WORDS.

The most vigorous and expressive words in the English language are of one syllable, and a large proportion of them are of Danish, Saxon and Celtic origin. Our soft, long words are principally from the Greek and Latin. That curtest and most sonorous of negatives, No, is from the Saxon; and so is its antithesis, Yes. Home, too, is Teutonic. The ancient Northmen were short talkers, and managed to condense a world of meaning into a single syllable. Their words, like their blows, were emphatic; and the deeper we go into the "well of English undefiled," the more of them we find. The clearest and best writers of our mother tongue used, and still use, monosyllables as their most effective missiles in argument. Cobbett hurled them like stones from a sling, and many a grandiloquent Goliah went down before them. Of late years, since "word-painting" came into fashion, and inflation has been mistaken for eloquence, long compounds have been in vogue, and the brief and pithy nouns and verbs have been shoved aside to make room for patchwork words, which the unclassical reader, who has never delved among Greek and Latin roots, cannot understand without a dictionary. All this is in bad taste. Simplicity and clearness are the sterling elements of a wholesome literature. Men who write and speak for the purpose of instructing and interesting the masses, should employ language that needs no translation to make it comprehensible to the graduates of the people's colleges—the common schools. It is a great mistake to suppose that big words are necessary to express big thoughts. The simpler the dress of a grand idea the better. Let those who think otherwise read the Psalms, or the Book of Job, or the Prophecies.

Too many American writers befog their meaning with verbal sperfluities.

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WHAT HARM?

"You do great harm by your careless habits of talking," said one to a young man who was fond of amusing himself, and attempting to amuse others, by unguarded and foolish talking.

"I don't mean to do any harm," said the young man; "I am not in the habit of saying things designed or adapted to injure others."

"That is true, still you do injure others, though the greatest injury is done to yourself."

"That is to say, some fools misunderstand me, and I suffer in their estimation, which is of no consequence at all."

"I had reference to the effect of your course on your own mind. The opinion of others respecting you is a matter of some consequence; the condition of your own mind is a matter of greater consequence."

Every young man should have a full understanding of the truth, that the condition of his own mind is a matter of greater importance to him than anything else.

In what way did the young man's habits of talking injuriously affect the condition of his mind? By rendering it frivolous, weak, unsound. When indulging the habit of foolish talking, he assumed the character of a foolish man. By a law of our being, that assumption had a tendency toward becoming a reality. He who begins by playing the fool, is in danger of ending in being a fool.

The young man's habit of talking caused men who heard him to think that he had little or no talent, though he had a great deal. A man may despise, or may affect to despise, the opinions of others respecting him, but he cannot avoid the influence of those opinions. They will not only diminish his influence with others; they will diminish his power. No man can put forth his full strength in a community where his capacity is greatly underrated.

◆

FANNY FERN ON SLEIGH-RIDING.

A sleigh-ride! some *he*-then exclaims, with a shrug of the shoulders, as he draws near the little black grating in the wall, which registers the household heat. A sleigh-ride—what pleasure can there be in *that?* Poor thing, he never lived in the part of the country where *you* were raised, and where sleighing was as much an institution as winter itself; your anger changes to pity as you think of his mis-spent life. What pleasure? Good gracious! Six steaming, spanking horses and a driver furry as a polar bear, his nose just visible above the dasher. Two or three dozen merry girls and boys, muffled to their eyes, stowed away with the hot bricks under the buffaloes. The amicable fight of pairs of lovers for the coveted "back-seat," where are no curious eyes to overlook the young man who, tying his lady-love's tippet under her chin, ties his heart in with it; or tucking the buffalo-robe closer about her shoulders, forgets to remove his arm after the operation. What pleasure, with the warm blood tingling in cheeks beneath eyes that flash like diamonds; what pleasure, when snow-powdered trees, fences and houses, fly past like magic to the merry sound of musical bells—spelt with and without an e. What pleasure, when the country inn is reached, where your supper was bespoke the day before, and rolling out of your manifold wrappers, you lift to your lips foaming glasses of hot "mulled wine," of which benighted New York knows not the recipe, and which I too having forgotten, wish somebody would tell me. What pleasure, when we gather round the table, laughing at each other's rosy faces, and discuss oysters and fowl, and more "mulled wine," till bones and empty glasses alone remain; and the waiter having cleared away the table, we have a good old-fashioned "blindman's buff," or an unceremonious dance in our comfortable winter dresses. What pleasure, when after being deliciously warmed and fed, we pile into the sleigh again, nestling close to the one we like best, and telling the driver to go the longest way home, look up at stars that never gleamed so brightly, and defy fate ever to make us shed a tear for anything. What pleasure, indeed? Humph—Ask some steady, well-to-do fathers-of-families I *could* name, but *won't*, and see if their eyes don't twinkle, spite of their "responsibilities" and "the panic."

FANNY FERN.

◆

SKATING.

A pretty girl gliding gracefully over a crystal mirror framed in the silver of the snow, comes a little nearer the popular idea of an angel than any other terrestrial object with which we are acquainted. We hazard this high-flown remark with the less hesitation, inasmuch as it accords with public opinion in all civilized countries blessed with the two articles to which it refers—loveable women and skateable ice. But if one steel-pinioned sylph, wheeling hither and thither over the shining plain, like a dove through the air, is calculated to inspire rapture in all male beholders, what must be their feelings when Beauty in *flocks* skims the crystal? We leave this question to be decided by the shivering enthusiasts who stand for hours on the edges of the ladies' skating-pond at Central Park, when the surface is strong enough to bear. Nobody cares for the male skaters on these occasions. Their most ingenious manœuvres attract no attention. Were they feather-heeled Mercuries, instead of humans in shaggy overcoats, it would be all the same. The ladies, as they "chase the hours with flying feet"—ah! *such* feet—are the sole cynosures. The twinkling of their fancy skates in the sunlight, sets the whole hecatombs of hearts a-flame.

Badinage apart, skating is a glorious exercise—as graceful as dancing and far more healthful; and certainly there is no delicacy of the season more delectable in the estimation of men of taste than a *lady on ice.*

◆

GIVE THE CHILDREN FRESH AIR.

Some parents make the great mistake of keeping their children in-doors during cold weather. Such a practice is pernicious in many respects. It enfeebles the bodies of children, and renders them peculiarly liable to be attacked by colds and coughs. A child should have its feet well shod with socks and boots, its body well wrapped in warm clothing, its head and ears securely protected from the cold, and then be let loose to play in the keen, bracing, winter air. By this means its body will become robust, and its spirits be kept bright and cheerful; whereas, if a child be shut up in the house, it will become fretful and feverish, and perhaps wind up with a severe attack of illness. A warm dress, and plenty of play and fresh air, are infinitely to be preferred to hot rooms, cossettings, and a winding-sheet.

◆

POETS IN THE MARKET.

A leading bookseller informs us that a greater number of volumes of the works of William Shakspeare are annually sold in the United States than of any other poet. Next to Shakspeare, Byron is the most saleable of bards. After Byron, but not far behind him, comes Scott; and after Scott, Moore. It is not possible to compute the exact number of volumes of these poets annually sold, because the editions are so numerous and the modes of sale so various. But enough is known to determine the rank of each poet in popular estimation. It is interesting to know, that the four European poets who are most universally influencing the American people are Shakspeare, Byron, Scott and Moore.

◆

MAKE THE LITTLE ONES HAPPY.

This is the season for parental affections to take on tangible forms—such, for instance, as skates, rocking horses, bon-bons, candies, picture books, dolls, and other inventions which delight the heart of childhood. A few shillings expended for the little ones now, may throw a glow of warmth and brightness over the household for the whole year. This season belongs to the children; they have an especial right to be made happy during these Christmas Holidays; and the parent who now remembers the little ones at his fireside, will find his gifts twice blessed—blessing equally the giver and the receivers.

◆

"MY FATHER—MY MOTHER LOVED ME."

Send your little child to bed *happy.* Whatever cares press, give it a warm good-night kiss, as it goes to its pillow. The memory of this, in the stormy years which fate may have in store for the little one, will be like Bethlehem's star to the bewildered shepherds. "My father—my mother—*loved* me!" Fate cannot take away *that* blessed heart-balm. Lips parched with the world's fever will become dewy again at this thrill of youthful memories. Kiss your little child before it goes to sleep!

◆

—See the Prospectus of the LEDGER for the New Year on our eighth page. It is safe to say, we think, that our list of contributors—representing every department of literature—has never been equalled by any journal in the world.

A DAY WITH LORD BYRON.

BY GEORGE BANCROFT.

After a ramble of three or four days among the Appenines, to climb the peak which commands a view of the Tuscan Sea as well as of the Adriatic, and to follow the footsteps of Milton among the shades of Vallombrosa, and after lingering through nearly three weeks of spring in Florence and its environs, I took leave of the delightful city, and descending the valley of the Arno, went through Pisa to Leghorn. The time on which I had fallen was opportune; the Mediterranean squadron of the United States lay at anchor in the harbor, and Lord Byron, having expressed a wish to see an American frigate, had been invited by Commodore Jones to inspect the Constitution. On the morning of the twenty-first of May, 1822, the few Americans who happened to be in Leghorn went on board the ship at the desire of its officers. About noon, Lord Byron, followed by his secretary, mounted its gangway. As he stepped upon the deck he appeared to be agitated, and it was remarked that at first his walk was unsteady; in part from his lameness, in part perhaps from an apprehension that curious gazers of some other country than America had intruded, for the sake of seeing him; but finding all present to be Americans, his manner became easy, frank, and cheerful. Each one of the officers and the guests was introduced to him. His high forehead, dark hair, and gray eyes; his features, which transmitted his thoughts and feelings as they rose, set off his fame as a poet; and every one who came near him held that day a happy one. One lady, of great personal beauty, put out her hand, and saying, "when I return to Philadelphia, my friends will ask for some token that I have spoken with Lord Byron," she gently took a rose which he wore in the button hole of his black frock-coat. He was pleased with her unaffected boldness, and the next day sent her a charming note and a copy of Outlines to Faust as a more durable memento.

On that day I had little opportunity to converse with him; but I received an invitation to visit him at Monte Nero. He gave the morning to the officers, and to a thorough examination of the ship, of which he well knew the history. It was a question, whether he should receive the honor of a salute; but as he filled no public station, and represented not his country or its sovereign, but only all the Muses, the stern commodore paid no heed to the wishes of Byron's younger admirers.

From the Constitution, Captain Chauncey took Byron to the Ontario; and there the junior officers could more freely indulge their enthusiasm. As he passed through their quarters, his eye lighted upon a New York edition of his poems; he took it up with every appearance of pleasure, and seemed to interpret it as an earnest of his fame. As he left the vessel, a salute was fired, the yards were manned; and three cheers were given with glorious heartiness and union.

The next morning I drove out from Leghorn to Monte Nero; and at about eleven sent a short note to Lord Byron to inquire when I might wait on him. His answer came immediately, and it was: "I shall be very happy in your visit.—Could you make it convenient about an *hour* hence,—for I have been lazy to-day and am not yet drest, and, I am ashamed to say, hardly awake." So I amused myself for an hour in looking at the sea, which lay before me at about three miles distance, and in plucking myrtle, with which the side of the mountain was overgrown. Punctually at the end of the hour, I made my way to Byron's villa. The house was of brick, painted a flaming red, and stood in the midst of cultivated grounds, which had no unusual attraction. The country in the rear was not picturesque; the whole aspect was prosaic and sultry; it must have been an undesirable summer residence except that on the west it was near the Mediterranean.

I was shown at once into a spacious, cool room, and in a moment Lord Byron joined me, offering me his hand. He began by asking many questions about the squadron, and generally about our ships of war, and our battles at sea. He appeared to be singularly well informed of the duels which had taken place among distinguished American naval officers, knowing the names of the combatants and something of the causes of their quarrels. He understood in some measure the political divisions in the United States, and gave his sympathy to the democratic party. Of American men of letters, he enumerated two or three with respect; among them Mr. Edward Everett; but he spoke most of Washington Irving. He had been delighted with Knickerbocker's History of New York, which he seemed to prefer of all Irving's works; and, though he thought Irving's style became afterwards "rather florid," he commended it very highly. On my expressing pleasure at hearing from him the praise of our American favorite, Byron replied, that his esteem for Irving was common to all his countrymen.

He spoke a great deal of a tour which he was bent on making through America; he believed that he should judge its people with impartiality; thus far, he said, none had gone among them but speculators; he should go unprejudiced, and would certainly keep himself unbiassed by prepossessions in favor of his native country.

Referring to his last journey from England to Switzerland, he described his tour on the Rhine as having given him unmingled pleasure; he liked the people as well as the scenery; and regretted only his ignorance of the German language, and that he had not seen more of Germany and its inhabitants. I told him how often his poems had been translated into German, and how widely they were read; that the Court preacher at Berlin had made a version of his Hebrew Melodies, that a canto of Childe Harold had been selected at Leipzig for the subject of a prize translation.

He asked me if I knew Goethe. It had been my good fortune to have repeatedly seen the great epicurean poet, philosopher, and critic, who was as unlike Byron as possible; bearing all things complacently except interruption when writing; serene even in his loves, having a heart as clear as crystal and as cold; the friend and minister of a prince, yet meditative rather than active; dwelling apart and as it were in high regions, removed beyond the cares of time; no ruler of the souls of peoples, but a god among his countrymen; his mind an unruffled surface that mirrored his age, and clothed its scepticism in verse; gifted with a refined sensibility, that defied the rules of inductive science, he yet looked nature in the eye, discerned analogies from afar, divined the answer to her sacred riddle, and heard the chorus of the flowers reveal the secret of the law which they obeyed in their change of form; no martyr, and with nothing of the spirit of martyrdom; never deeply touched by the sufferings of nations in his time; contemplating with equal indifference the stormy revolutions among the objects of his passion, and the overturns of empire in America and in Europe. Twice I was with him at Weimar, and once on a bright Autumn morning Goethe had received me in a garden attached to the apartments which he occupied in Jena. Dressed in a frock coat, without a waistcoat, and with not the cleanest linen, he came with the stately step and majesty of mien that poets attribute to the Olympian Jupiter. As I walked for an hour or more by his side, he spoke of many things, but particularly of Byron, saying that he devoured greedily everything which Byron wrote; that he admired Manfred, and all the more willingly, because it appeared to him to have been imitated from his own Faust; that Don Juan, of which two cantos only had then appeared, was the most full of life and genius; that its manner was in keeping with the subject; and speaking of English as though he knew it well enough to pass judgment on style and diction, he pretended to find the model of the polysyllabic rhymes in the satires and pleasantries of Swift.

To this Byron replied, that the popularity of his works in Germany was new to him, and would console him for the abuse he was constantly receiving in England; that he had dedicated one of his late works to Goethe, though his publisher, for some reason, had omitted the dedication without asking his leave to do so; that he should take more effectual care that a poem which he was about to print should be inscribed to Goethe. As to Manfred, he declared that he deemed it honor enough to have Manfred mentioned with Faust, but that, at the time of writing it, he had never read Faust, and knew nothing about it, except that a short time before he had conceived the idea of his own drama, Monk Lewis had translated to him some of the scenes of that of Goethe, and had given him an idea of its plan.

Shelley, he added, was translating Faust, and this led him to a defence of Shelley. "You may have heard," said he, "many foolish stories of his being a man of no principle, an atheist, and all that; but he is not;" and he explained what appeared in Shelley as atheism as only a subtle metaphysical idealism. He went on to defend himself. He owned very frankly, that many of his friends in Italy as well as in England had entreated him not to go on with Don Juan; he apologized for its immorality, pleading in extenuation the example of Fielding, and that there were much worse things in Smollett than in anything he himself had written. He asked, too, what the fault-finders would say to the introduction to Goethe's Faust.

He then spoke of the clamor which had risen against him from all sides in England. He said with an air of indifference, he had heard that Jeffery was preparing a new and a severe article against him in the Edinburgh Review; that a letter of remonstrance had been addressed to his publisher, "not to me," said he, "for me they deem incorrigible." Among other enemies, he observed that the king (George IV.) was determined on persecuting him. "I never went to court," he said, "and one evening at a ball I was presented to the king (then prince regent) at the king's own request, not at mine; I never asked to be presented, and yet the king complains of me, that after he had treated me so civilly, I had written eight lines against him. The lines were written before I was presented to him."*

He turned round to hand me one of the pamphlets written in abuse of him, but then corrected himself, saying, he had just sent it with others to the binder. His manner affected careless ease and gaiety, but it was plain to me that he had been deeply wounded; that with a genuine contempt for the cavils of impertinent mediocrity, he valued the good opinion of his own countrymen beyond the praise of all the world beside, and that he specially deplored the expected censure from Jeffery. Yet he was too proud to yield to menace; and when he was attacked, it was his nature to defy. He seemed ready to say with one of his own heroes:

> No; though that cloud were thunder's worst,
> And charged to crush him, let it burst.

He alluded with evident satisfaction to the part he had taken in defending Pope. Of Shakespeare he disclaimed being one of the most enthusiastic admirers, and thought he had by some been overrated; he said that Johnson's preface to Shakspeare contained the most correct judgment of Shakespeare as a poet; that it expressed his opinion of Shakespeare exactly.

Of Italy Byron spoke with affectionate interest. He deplored the success of the Austrians in putting down the Neapolitan revolution, which happened during his residence at Ravenna. "Had the Neapolitans fought bravely," he said, "we were all ready to rise in the rear of their invaders." He said that the ignominious defeat of the revolutionists alone prevented an outbreak in the Romagna; that he was then compelled to leave Ravenna, because all his friends were, one after another, driven into exile; the priests stuck up an affiche, threatening him with he knew not what. But for the future of Italy Byron was full of hope. The young men of Italy, he said, are in a fair way; they long for liberty; let them secure that, and afterwards study politics and learn how to govern.

The land from Monte Nero slopes downward towards the Mediterranean; Lord Byron, who had made an excuse for leaving me a moment, asked me to go into another room, which commanded a view of the sea. He took me to the window to point out the pleasant views, and under his direction I caught a glimpse of Napoleon's prison, the island of Elba. On turning to take leave, to my great surprise, I found a lady had entered noiselessly and taken a seat on the sofa. It was the Countess Guiccioli. She appeared to me to be about twenty-five, though her age was really less. Her hair was a light auburn; her complexion very fair; her cheeks delicately rosy; her forehead rather high and of the purest white, while her fine large eyes were dark, expressing calmness and gentleness. Her nose was a perfect model for a sculptor; her mouth was small, and when she spoke showed faultless rows of teeth; her smile was singularly pleasing; one would have said that innocence and repose were the leading expression of her countenance; she seemed incapable of wishing ill to any one. I had seen and have often seen more splendid beauty, but her manner was that of uncommon gentleness and amiability.

I had the seat nearest her. She was very fond of music, and Lord Byron had just imported for her a piano forte from Vienna. She praised the superior excellence of the instrument; and had much to say or to inquire about the great love of the Germans for music; the social habits of the Berlinese; the manner in which Lalla Rookh had been represented as a pageant at the court of Berlin; and many things relating to France and Italy. The conversation was in Italian; which, as far as I could judge, Lord Byron spoke perfectly well. In the course of it, he had something to say in praise of the Italian language, which he appeared to think more beautiful than the English; as if unmindful that the English is the best, the simplest, the truest of all, and that he had written in it much that will endure as long as the language is spoken or remembered.

It was late in the day when I left Monte Nero. Lord Byron had been throughout most perfectly courteous and friendly, adding one civil thing to another, and detaining me by some new suggestion, when I offered once or twice to take leave. I could not doubt that the scorn which he sometimes professed for English opinion was only an evidence of how greatly he would have valued the esteem of the best in England, and how keenly his exquisitely sensitive nature suffered from their reproaches. In estimating his rank among poets, it must be remembered that he died at thirty six; at an age when Milton had not produced his epic; when Dryden's genius had given imperfect evidence of his great powers; when Scott had become known only by his Lay of the Last Minstrel; when Schiller had not produced the magnificent dramas that are his crowning glory; when Goethe had not written his Iphigenia, or Tasso, or Faust. And Byron's mind like Schiller's, needed time to purify its passions and clear itself of imperfections. But the lot of Byron has been hardest of all. His wife, against the first advice of her counsel, insisted on a separation from him, refusing to attempt to cherish in him the better life which might still have risen up; his chosen friend, to whose fidelity he entrusted with touching earnestness the defence of his good name, accepted money from his enemies to burn the carefully prepared memoir that he prepared for posterity; he would willingly have made a sacrifice of himself to give liberty and unity to Italy, but the ill preparedness of her sons shipwrecked his hopes; to Greece he devoted his fortune and his life, and died before he saw her emancipation secured. Sorrow seemed to claim him as her own, and to give him no compensation but the power of expressing sorrow as no other English poet has done. His best thoughts were wrung from him by emotions of excessive grief. His genius like the lightning wrapt its brilliancy in the darkness of the blackest clouds; but though he called himself a misanthrope, he melted at the sight of distress, was ever ready to help the poor and the suffering with his purse and his sympathy; and spoke and acted and died for the liberties of mankind.

In his poems, he was not so much the representative of his native country, as of the state of the European mind in his time; yet even in Britain he takes rank as the first English poet of this century, while on the continent that rank is awarded to him without a peer. In America, his popularity has declined less than in England; but it is the renovated nation of the Greeks that fervently cherish his memory, as the unselfish martyr to their independence.

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* The eight lines referred to are those "to a lady weeping;" the Princess Charlotte of Wales, who was said to have burst into tears on hearing that the Whigs could not form a cabinet.

> Weep, daughter of a royal line,
> A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
> Ah! happy if each tear of thine
> Could wash a father's fault away!
>
> Weep—for thy tears are virtue's tears—
> Auspicious to these suffering isles;
> And be each drop in future years
> Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

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LIEUT. YARNALL—A TRUE STATEMENT.

NEW YORK, Dec. 8, 1860.

ROBERT BONNER, ESQ.—*Dear Sir:*—Allow me respectfully to call your attention to an article published in your valuable paper, under to-day's date, entitled "Lieutenant Yarnall," by a correspondent of your paper, *J. N. S.*, of *Marion*, Ohio, in which the writer states that Lieutenant *John J. Yarnall*, (deceased,) the hero of Lake Erie, and Commodore Perry's first lieutenant in the memorable and glorious battle that shed imperishable lustre on the American navy, did, for the last few years of his life, reside in Norton, a small town of Delaware County, Ohio, where he earned a small pittance by prescribing a few botanical medicines to the people of that vicinity, and by telling fortunes, or predicting the future to those who would reward him for the same, and pretending to be gifted with second sight, by which he would tell the persons calling on him where to find property that had strayed away or been stolen from them. By these means he (Yarnall) *procured a livelihood for a number of years*, and won for himself the name of *Old Pluto;* and that *he died* about twenty years ago, and was buried with the honors of war—that many of the old veterans of the war of 1812 gathered around the grave of this *poor old man(!) where "he sleeps his last sleep,"* and *where* no sound can awake him to glory again—that they shed tears over his grave, and *that they remembered the time that they fought with him on the battlefields of his country*—and that *no monument or slab marks the resting* place of the old *veteran:* and all this "J. N. S." communicates to the world, through your valuable and widely extended colums.

Now, Mr. Editor, through the same channel allow me, "An old Veteran of the wars of 1812 to 1815," to say a few words on the subject matter of this communication. I do so, *in justice to the truth of History*, and in justice to, and admiration of, the character and glorious career of my deceased friend, the same *John Joliffe Yarnall*, and in justice to the outraged feelings of his numerous friends and relatives. I am charitable enough to believe, Mr. Editor, that your correspondent, "J. N. S.," has been imposed upon by false statements of others; or, if such things did actually take place in that little town of Ohio as he relates, then indeed have the goood people there been most egregiously imposed upon by a false and lying hero—and this, I think, was the case, for I cannot believe that there exists on earth a human being so vile and degraded as to wilfully and intentionally pervert the truth of history, and wantonly lacerate the feelings of the relatives of so much departed worth.

I sir, entered the U. S. Navy as a midshipman, during our last war (of 1812) with Great Britain, and served in the U. S. Corvette "John Adams," in 1814, on the Mission of Peace to Ghent, with Clay, John Quincy Adams, Gallatin, &c., and returned home after an absence of 9 months; during all this time, *this same* John J. Yarnall was 2nd Lieut. of the "John Adams," and I was attached to his watch. Lieut. Yarnall was ordered to this ship (after the victory of Lake Erie,) on the 24th January, 1814. On the 4th of January, 1815, both the *same* Lieut. *John J. Yarnall* and myself, were ordered to join the U. S. Frigate Guerriere, 44 guns—the flag ship of Commodore Decatur's Squadron, destined to subjugate Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, and we did so join said frigate, and sailed in her in our respective capacities, he as 3d Lieutenant, and I as midshipman and one of the aids of Commodore Decatur, and again for several months was I attached to Lieut. Jno. J. Yarnall's watch, and we both had the honor of fighting in the same division during our bloody battle (single handed) on the 16th June, 1815 with the Algerine Line of Battle ship "Mesora," 64 guns, and which resulted in her capture. Lieut. Jno. J. Yarnall's health being much impaired, Commodore Decatur, (with whom Yarnall was a great favorite) obtained him leave, after our treaty of peace with the Barbary Powers, to return home, and he accordingly quitted the Guerriere Frigate, and joined the ill-fated sloop of war L'Epervier, to my certain knowledge, and *was lost at sea in that vessel, on her trip from Algiers, about August*, 1815. *These are stubborn facts* and cannot be controverted; so much, then, for the *veracity* of "J. N. S."

Now, sir, although I am fully aware that by the length of this communication I impose on your columns, still I believe you will give this testimony to the world, as the erroneous statement appeared in your columns; and I beg leave further to say that, last week, I addressed a letter to the Navy Department on this subject, so as to fortify my recollection of forty-five years' standing. The original reply, I herewith transmit to you; it is as follows, viz.:

NAVY DEPARTMENT, 4th December, 1860.

SIR—In reply to your letter of the 1st instant, requesting answers to certain inquiries in relation to the naval career of the late Lieutenant John J. Yarnall, I have to inform you that it appears from records of this Department, that he was ordered to the John Adams on the 24th of January, 1814; to the Frigate Guerriere January 4th, 1815; and he was lost in the U. S. Brig Epervier, on her return from the Mediterranean to the United States in August, 1815.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

Mr. J. B. NONES, New York. I. TOUCEY.

Thus you see, Mr. Editor, the *proof of my assertions* is *perfect, the truth of history*, and *Yarnall's fair fame successfully vindicated*, and "J. N. S." placed in the wrong. Yours, respectfully, J. B. NONES.

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WHY DO THEY ALL DO IT?

We wonder if our ladies are aware how injurious is the practice, so general, of crossing their hands and arms over the waist as they walk! Do they know that it contracts the chest, and prevents that free circulation which is so desirable to the blood? Do they know that their fingers in winter would not become "numb," if allowed to hang by the side, or if the arm swung gently in walking, as does a man's?

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TIPTON, Moniteau County, Mo.

EDITOR OF NEW YORK LEDGER:—*Dear Sir*—There was a man by the name of Henry Quincy, an Englishman, said he had a brother-in-law living in the north part of New York, *name* not recollected; came to this place some time in the spring of 1859; he sickened and died very suddenly; had some effects, *money* and *clothing*; his clothing he brought in a valise (new); I think he was about 40 or 45 years old; said he never had any family; was an old bachelor. If this news should reach his *brother-in-law*, and he will address me at the above place, I will give him all the particulars, if his letter comes properly identified. Address

P. D. STEPHENS, Sr.

P. S. Will you be so good as to give the above an insertion, that the friends of deceased may learn where he died, &c.

THE DEATH-SCENE.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

My mother, 'tis a long and weary time
Since last I looked upon thy sad, sweet face,
And listened to the gentle spirit-tones
Of thy dear voice of music. I was then
A child, a bright-haired child. The fearful thoughts
Which slowly fastened on my throbbing brain,
That thou wast passing from the earth away,
Was my young life's first sorrow. Through the long
And solemn watches of that awful night,
Kind friends, who dearly loved us, gathered round
Thy dying couch, and, in my agony,
I shrieked to them to save thee; but with tears
And in the tones of holy sympathy,
They told me thou wouldst die.
Ah, then I bowed
My head to God, whose worship thy dear lips
Had taught me, and to Him with bursting heart
I prayed that He would spare thee. And, as there
I knelt, a holy calm, as if from Heaven,
Came stealing o'er my spirit, and a voice
Floated into my soul. It said that thou
Must leave me, that thy home was in the sky,
But that thou still wouldst love and guard thy child,
And hover round him on thy angel-wings
In all his wanderings here.
My mother, then
I rose in more than childhood's strength, and watched
The fading of thy life. Dear friends still hung
Around thy pillow, but I saw them not.
Wild lamentations and deep sobs were breathed
From hearts of anguish, but I heard them not.
A man of God poured forth his soul in prayer
For thy soul's welfare, but I heard him not,
I saw but thy wan cheek, thy parted lips,
Thy half closed eyes, so meek and calm beneath
Their blue-veined lids, thy bright, dishevelled locks,
Thy pallid brow, damp with the dews of death,
And the faint heaving of thy breast, that oft
In happy hours had pillowed my young head
To sweet and gentle slumber; and I heard
But the faint struggle of thy failing breath,
Thy stifling sighs, and the high, holy words
That seemed to fall like dew-drops on my soul
From out the blessed skies. All suddenly
Thy blue eyes opened, and a moment looked
Upon thy child with one fixed, burning gaze,
In which the deep and hoarded love of years
Was all concentred; a convulsive thrill
Shot through the fibres of thy wasted frame;
And death was there—ay, thou wast mine and death's.
And then my tears again gushed wildly forth,
But light from Heaven broke through them with a soft
Prismatic glory, as I gazed above,
And saw thee mounting, like a new-made star,
Far up thy glowing pathway in the heavens.

THE MYSTERIOUS MARRIAGE.

BY E. A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "LOST DEEDS," "PLANTER DAUGHTER," &c., &c., &c.

[For the benefit of new readers, who may commence with this number of the LEDGER, we condense that portion of "The Mysterious Marriage" already published, so they can understand the remainder of the story just as well as though they had read it all from the beginning:—Ernest Linden, the hero of the story, in early manhood was engaged to Ellinor Graham, but being entrapped into a marriage in the interior of one of the New England States, (where he was passing a vacation under the name of Ernest Gordon,) with Madeline Waters, who had fallen violently in love with him, he was afraid to consummate his engagement with Ellinor. He finally went abroad, and while he was in Paris, news came to his family (consisting of his father and a widowed sister named Mrs. Gaston) that he had made a brilliant match, with a wealthy English lady of high connections. Soon after, General Euston, whose motherless daughter Clara, Ellinor had taken care of from infancy, being on his death bed, prevailed on Ellinor to marry him, that she might have a legal as well as moral right to continue her guardianship of Clara, as he had no faith in his brother, who else might seek to control her fortunes. So Ellinor Graham became Mrs. Ellinor Euston, and a widow, on the same day. An old friend of Clara Euston's family, named Lumley, had left his fortune to Clara, in case his missing son, Albert, should never return to claim it; and so long a time had elapsed, it was supposed that the long-lost Albert must be dead; but suddenly, a person pretending to be the missing heir appeared and claimed the estate. Clara's lawyers, Mr. Spring, and his partner Mr. Ashley who was deeply in love with Clara, contested the claim, and Ashley went on a mysterious journey to probe matters connected with the suit. The claimant was in fact an impostor named Alfred Lumley, a cousin of the true heir, whom he had got into his power, and who, under the assumed name of Gayoso, was living in feeble health not far from New York, under the care of a fortune-teller named Madame Latude, who had known and loved Gayoso in his youth, when under his true name of Albert Lumley he had lived in his father's house. This woman, fathoming Alfred Lumley's designs, had informed Mr. Spring of his true character, and offered to sell out Albert's (Gayoso's) rights for one-half the fortune; but on her way to his office, with a conveyance executed by Albert, she had been robbed of the document by an agent of Alfred's, and Mr. Spring thereafter looked upon her as an impostor who had tried to impose on him. In the meantime, old Mr. Linden and his daughter Mrs. Gaston, and Ellinor and Clara, had discovered that Ernest's wife was not a scion of a highly connected English family, but a female fiend, who by some unknown means had *forced* him into this "MYSTERIOUS MARRIAGE." Mrs. Linden was now playing the part of a fiend; was secretly in league with both the Lumleys, and trying to cheat both; and both had a strange power over her from a knowledge of her past history. To complicate matters still more, she had found out the secret of Ernest's first marriage, Madeline Gordon having come to the city in search of her husband, her boy having died with starvation, and she herself been discovered and relieved by Ellinor, who had placed her with a Mrs. Seyton and her daughter Margaret, whom Ellinor had also relieved and set up in business in the city. Alfred Lumley, the false heir, fearing defeat at the hands of Clara's lawyers, had determined to inveigle Clara herself into a marriage with him, and to use any means, however ruffianly, to accomplish his purpose. In this scheme he was assisted by a half-sister, named Mrs. Pierre, who passed for a wealthy Cuban, and who to further the plot had fascinated Clara's uncle into a proposed marriage, and prevailed on him to help her carry off Clara to Cuba, (on the steamer on which they themselves were going,) to attend their wedding, which was to take place at Mrs. Pierre's estate (on that island) called Mirandola. When Clara should be in their power, Lumley was to make his appearance, *and compel her to marry him.* In the last chapter published, Clara had just made her friends, the Seytons, (where Madeline Gordon was staying,) a call, and while there she receives a warning from Madame Latude *against making a voyage by sea.* How she obeyed the warning, and how her uncle succeeded in his plot to carry her off, the reader will ascertain from the following chapters.]

CHAPTER XXIV.—CONTINUED.

A door half of glass, shaded by a white muslin curtain, admitted Margaret and Miss Euston into a comfortable room, well lighted by two windows that looked into a small yard. A few necessary additions had been made to the furniture which Margaret and her mother formerly possessed, and a bright fire made the apartment quite cheerful. The sun was shining through the windows, and Mrs. Seyton sat within its influence, feeling with satisfaction that the golden beams were falling upon her, though she could not see them. While she felt their warmth, memory went back to other days, and brought to her mental vision vivid pictures of sunny meadows and cool, shadowy forests, through which golden tracery gleamed upon the grassy sward, as the breeze rippled among the stately trees, and tossed aside their branches.

As usual, Mrs. Seyton was busily engaged in knitting the brilliant webs which had suddenly become so popular among their customers, that the old woman began to dream of acquiring an independence for herself, without the aid of her daughter. Madeline was placed on a low seat almost at her feet, and just now her fingers were employed in weaving together a wreath of flowers, in which all those that typify the immortality of the soul were to be found. Clara instantly knew that it was intended to ornament the grave of her son, and she regarded the wan and wasted face with an expression of deep compassion. As the young lady entered, Madeline looked up vaguely, but immediately returned to her occupation, as if quite unconscious of her presence.

Mrs. Seyton already knew Clara's step, and she put forth her wrinkled hand as she said:

"Welcome, daughter of love and compassion; fairer than Sarah, more to be desired than Rachel, for whom twice seven years of toil were given, I am sure you are. Pray come near to me, Miss Euston, and let me feel the influence of your sweet presence."

Clara clasped her hand in both her own, and sat down close beside her.

"I am glad to see you looking so well this morning, Mrs. Seyton, but I beg that you will not flatter me by such comparisons as those you have just made. I am vain enough already, I am afraid."

"Oh, my dear young lady, I do not seek to flatter you. God knows that I would not dim His precious work by blowing the breath of adulation upon such a soul as yours. It is written, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' but I feel it to be a blessing to receive from such as you and your noble mother. May the Great Ruler save you from harm, and give you his most precious blessings, is the burden of my hourly petitions."

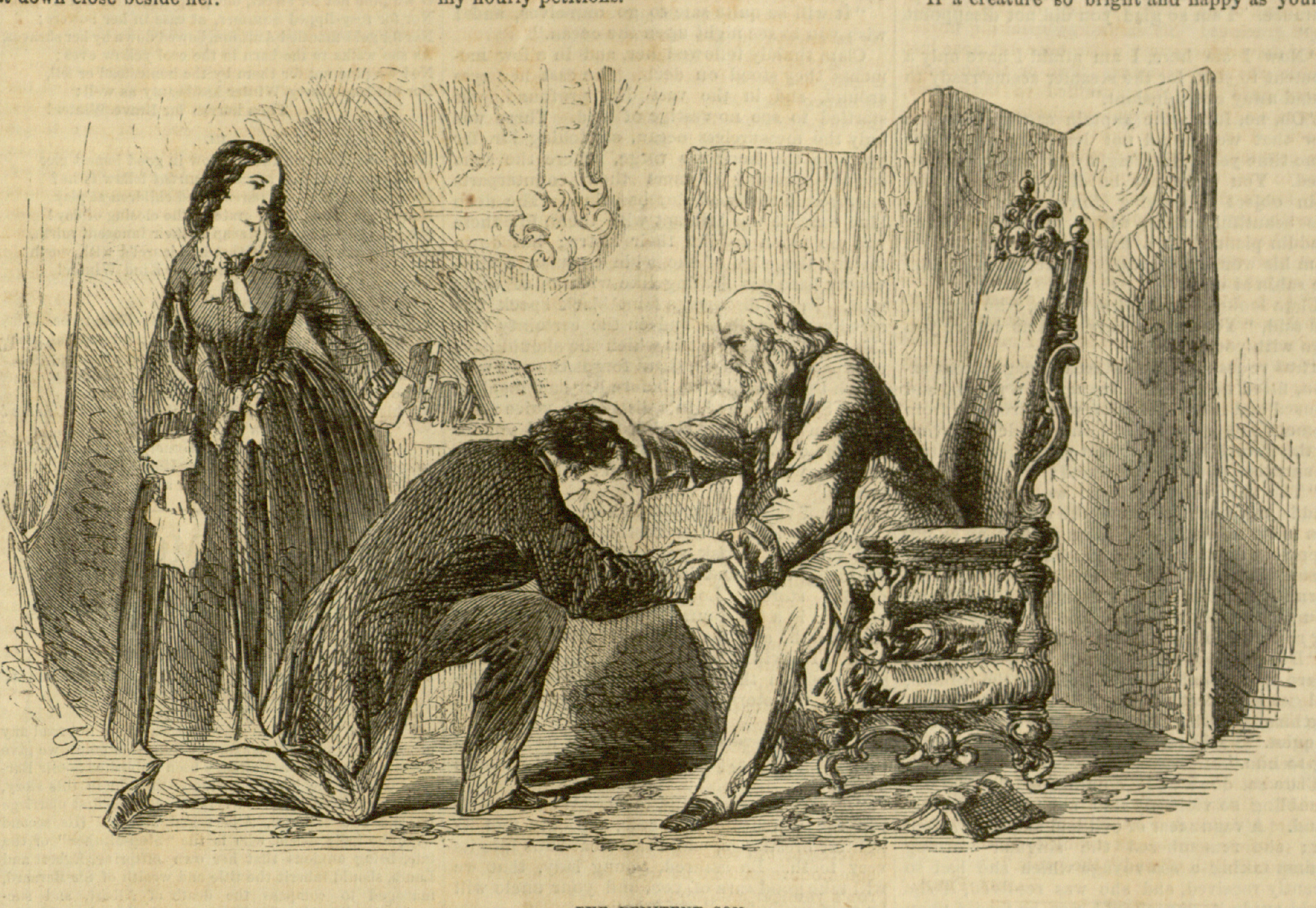
"I thank you, indeed, Mrs. Seyton, for are we not also told that 'the prayers of the righteous availeth much?' and I am very sure *your* petitions must bring good to those on whom you invoke blessings. The certainty that an humble Christian like yourself remembers me in her daily prayers, will give me double trust in the future."

Clara turned to Madeline, gently stretched forth her hand toward the flowers she held, and asked:

"May I examine them? They seem to be beautifully made."

She turned those wild, sad eyes upon her, and said:

"If a creature so bright and happy as yourself can bear that a breath from the charnel house shall breathe its chill air upon you, touch them. But if you shrink from death and the grave, leave them to one who has nothing brighter to think of. Miss Euston, you have nothing in common with me and my sorrow; do not, then, let its shadow come near you; better not even let the death flowers brush your hand, for their contact may bring you sorrow."



THE PENITENT SON.

"I am not superstitious, Mrs. Gordon, and I feel so sorry for your bereavement that I should be glad to assist you to decorate your boy's tomb. A friend has placed a monument over his grave, and my mother bade me tell you that you can visit it with her this afternoon, if you feel well enough to go to Greenwood."

Madeline rocked to and fro with her hands clasped over her eyes, and the flowers fell scattered around her. She presently looked up, and asked:

"*Who* put that cold, hard stone over my little lad? Wasn't it enough that his life was passed in darkness, but his grave must be shut out from God's sunshine. No, no, let grass and flowers spring from his ashes. I do not wish them to be clogged in darkness, turning to clods of dull earth. Let it be taken away, Miss Euston—let it be taken away."

"Come and see it first, Mrs. Gordon," replied Clara, gently. "Your boy's tomb is a beautiful work of art; it is only a shaft of marble, on which is poised an angel bearing a child away to the better land. The warm beams of the sun can still fall upon his last resting place."

"And *who*, I again ask, placed that expensive monument upon the grave of *my* child? Is it not a sad mockery that the being who perished of want, should lie in Greenwood with sculptured marble adorning his solemn place of nothingness? Oh! Miss Euston, your mother would not have done this; who then has? I insist on knowing."

"You must apply to mamma for information on that subject, for I do not myself know."

Madeline searchingly regarded her; she slowly asked:

"What name was inscribed upon this marble folly?"

"None; near its base is a female figure in bas relief, representing Grief—a delicate allusion to his singular name."

"Singular as it was, it was his birthright. Yes—from the cradle to the grave, his name was most appropriate to one banned, forsaken, as he was. I know whose pride erected that statue, and I repudiate it; but I do not know his true name. I *never* knew the true name of the man I once loved better than aught else on earth. He called himself Ernest Gordon, and as such I sought him, but found him not."

Clara flushed and then grew pale. Ernest Gordon was the baptismal name of one she loved and admired too much to believe him capable of such wrong as was here shadowed forth.

Madeline caught the expression of her face, and she said:

"Ah—I see that you suspect, if you do not actually know him. But I will not again ask his name, as your mother might be displeased if it were revealed. I will gather up my flowers and put them away, for it will be useless to carry my poor offering to a sculptured tomb. It was the humble grave of *my* child I sought to deck, not the haughty resting place of an aristocrat's son. Ah me! he should have placed a figure of gaunt famine over him, as most appropriate to his actual fate."

"Do not put aside your flowers, Mrs. Gordon: they are the most beautiful offerings which can be brought to the dead, for they are types of our evanescent existence, and therefore always touching to the heart. Finish your wreath, I entreat, and take it with you this afternoon to Greenwood."

At length Madeline was persuaded to go on with her occupation, and Clara turned to Mrs. Seyton and inquired if she could further serve them in any way, as her mother wished to know if they were quite comfortable in their new quarters.

"Many thanks to your kind mother; we are more than comfortable—we are hopeful and happy; we are contented in the present, and have fair prospects in the future. Bear with you, Miss Euston, the united thanks of three grateful hearts."

"I will be sure to inform mamma of all you have said; and now, Margaret, I will go into the shop with you, and select some gloves, as I need a supply."

She bade Mrs. Seyton and Madeline good morning, and passed into the outer room. While she was selecting the colors she preferred, a tall, fair woman came in, and inquired for handkerchiefs. As Margaret turned to get them for her, the eyes of the stranger were attracted toward Clara. She fixed a pair of clear, luminous, gray orbs upon the young girl, and an expression of intense interest gradually shone in them. She pretended to be examining the handkerchiefs offered for her inspection, but was evidently not thinking of them. Margaret took out a pair of lace gloves, elegantly embroidered, and said:

"Try the effect of one of these on your hand, Miss Clara; they are the most elegant I have ever seen."

Clara removed her own glove, drew on the lace one, admired its beauty, and ordered the pair to be put up with the others. As she laid them back upon the glass case, the rosy palm of her hand was turned toward the stranger. She started, glanced keenly at the sweet face of its owner, and suddenly stretching forth her own hand, said:

"I trust you will excuse me, young lady; but the strong attraction that draws me toward you will not be repelled. Let me look at your hand, I entreat; for the lines I caught a glimpse of just now, seem portentous of some calamity at this crisis of your life, which a timely warning may avert."

Clara buried her hand in her fur cuff, as she replied:

"Excuse me, Madam, but this seems very singular. Are you a fortune-teller?"

"Not a vulgar dealer in cards, but a reader of Fate through natural sympathies. I feel that I have been thrown upon your path to-day for some purpose best known to the Power that guides our steps; and my instinctive affinity with you bids me not to neglect its warning. Let me look at your hand, I entreat."

Influenced in spite of herself by her earnestness, Clara timidly held out her hand. The stranger turned the soft palm to the light, and carefully perused the lines. She said:

"Your life has been free from care, as any one may see who looks into your undimmed eyes, without the aid of palmistry; it promises to be a prosperous and happy one, if a near and imminent danger is avoided. I warn you not to take a sea voyage. If you do, the consequences may be fatal to you. Be careful with whom you trust yourself within the next forty-eight hours. After that, the danger will be past, provided you attend to my caution. I dare say you think me mad to speak thus to an utter stranger; but the spirit that rules me bade me do it, and I obeyed."

She relinquished the hand, and hurriedly resuming her glove, Clara said—

"I thank you, madam, for your interest in me, though I am at a loss to comprehend its source. If two days of caution will secure my future happiness, I may surely promise them to you. I have at present no idea of taking a sea voyage, though I admit that one would be very agreeable to me. Good morning."

"I see that you think me insane, young lady; but before Friday morning dawns, you will know that there is 'method in my madness.' I conjure you to remember what I have said. I see the danger looming before you, though I cannot precisely ascertain its nature. Your want of faith breaks the link which brings me in rapport with your future."

Clara smiled, nodded to Margaret, and tripped from the shop, convinced that the stranger was a fit candidate for the lunatic asylum. As the door closed, the stranger turned to Margaret, and inquired—

"Do you know the name of that young lady?"

"It is Miss Clara Euston."

"What! the heiress to the Lumley estate, now in dispute?"

"The very same, and I do hope the suit will terminate in her favor, for a more noble use could not be made of money than she makes of hers. I owe everything I have in the world to her and her mother."

Madame Latude did not listen to her. She hurriedly pushed aside the box of handkerchiefs, and left the shop. When she reached the street, Miss Euston had already turned into Broadway, but she followed her as rapidly as possible. A sudden impulse moved her to communicate with Clara, and inform her of the actual position of her affairs, together with the nefarious robbery which had been perpetrated on herself a few days before.

She reached Broadway, saw the young lady crossing toward the Park, and she walked rapidly down the street. Pre-occupied and careless, the throng of vehicles at that point did not detain her; she went on like one in a dream, was struck down by an unmanageable horse, from beneath whose feet she was lifted and carried into a store. She was quite senseless, and unable to give a clue to her name or place of abode; the owner of the establishment ordered her to be conveyed to a charitable asylum, where she would be taken care of until she resovered sufficiently to make known her residence.

CHAPTER XXV.

Clara had made an appointment to meet her mother, and, after making a few purchases, they entered the carriage, which Mrs. Euston ordered to be driven to Mr. Linden's. She explained that, since Clara went out, a message from Mrs. Gaston had urgently requested her presence, as the family were in distress at the singular conduct of Mrs. Linden.

Of late, Mrs. Euston had so frequently been summoned on a similar errand, that she was becoming heartily wearied with the caprices of this strange being. Mrs. Gaston was a delicate woman, who could not bear unusual excitement without suffering from violent nervous headaches; and the constant strain on heart and mind which Mrs. Linden of late had perseveringly kept up, told upon her health in a most painful manner. When she could no longer bear her burden alone, she sent for her old friend to aid and advise her in the unhappy condition to which those she most loved were reduced by the conduct of this monomaniac.

Mrs. Linden suffered no member of the family to have an hour of repose; she invaded even the sanctuary hitherto held sacred to the venerable father, and daily threatened him with bringing a suit against his son for bigamy; asserting that Linden had another wife living at the time he gave her his hand. Vainly did he offer an explanation of his true position, which has already been given. Mrs. Linden recurred to it again and again, as a means of torture, for she saw that the fear of any fatal consequences to himself was not felt; the real dread arose from a morbid pride, which caused the family to shrink from the exposure of the misalliance with Madeline, and its wretched results.

When the carriage stopped in front of Mr. Linden's house, Mrs. Euston said to Clara:

"I do not wish you to come in with me, my dear. Trouble and sickness are here, and I can best aid them by going to my old friends alone. You can return home, and send the carriage for me this evening."

Clara submitted to her mother's wishes, and was driven away, while Mrs. Euston entered the house of unrest. She was taken at once to the darkened room in which Mrs. Gaston lay, suffering from acute spasms of pain. She put out her hand and said:

"I am so glad you have come, Ellinor, for the house has been in a turmoil all the morning; and, as usual, the excitement has made me quite useless."

"What has happened now? Another caprice on the part of Mrs. Linden? I really thought she had exhausted the catalogue, and could find no new method of torment."

"It is only a darker phase of the old annoyance, Ellinor. She has attacked my father with her complaints; of late, she leaves him no leisure—no quiet, and his health is breaking fast. Oh! Nelly, to see his venerable head dragged to the dust by this wretched woman, is more than I can bear! She rushes into his room at all hours, with her frantic complaints against my brother because he does not love her; and when the door is locked against her intrusions, she lies upon the floor beside it, and fills the house with her frantic cries. Oh! it is disgraceful! It is terrible!"

"Cornelia, you describe the vagaries of a maniac. Is Mrs. Linden an opium-eater? I have sometimes suspected it, from the singular appearance of her eyes, and her fitful manner."

"I have lately discovered that she uses morphine to excess, and to-day she is delirious from its effects. Hark! do you hear that cry? It comes from Amelia's room. Go to my father, Nelly, and inform him of the cause of the spasms she is suffering from. He is excitable, and easily alarmed; soothe him as you best know how, and comfort the poor old heart that is breaking over the wretched fate of his only son."

Mrs. Euston pressed her hand, and at once proceeded towards the library. She shuddered as the wild cries from Mrs. Linden's room echoed through the spacious hall, and when she reached the door she paused an instant to recall that evening on which she had entered that same apartment to announce to the father the news of his son's marriage. Though her own hopes were blighted, how sincere had been her wishes for Ernest's happiness; yet how futile had they proved; for *this* was the result of the brilliant match his friends supposed he had made.

"What was the mystery of that unnatural union?" she again asked. "What would be its ultimate result to those connected with this dire incarnation of evil and malice?"

Her knock upon the door was unnoticed, and softly turning the bolt, she entered. In a large chair in front of the fire sat Mr. Linden, with his hands pressed upon his ears, his head bowed on a table that stood near him, over which his long, gray locks floated, as he endeavored to shut out the sounds that sent a bitter pang to his haughty spirit. *Disgrace* had come to his aristocratic home, through the wife that, he remembered with remorse, he had for a season considered more worthy of his son's position and talents than his own cherished Ellinor.

How had his pride exulted in the noble blood—the reputed wealth of his new daughter; and how lowly was it now abased! Every menial in the house knew that Mrs. Linden was raving from delirium, brought on by the excessive use of a stimulating drug, and he knew that every hour of his unhappy son's life was embittered by the fantasies of the creature who was never entirely free from its influence.

Mrs. Euston placed her hand upon his arm before he was aware of her presence, and when he lifted his venerable face she saw that it was wet with tears. The old so seldom weep that there is something appalling in that excess of emotion which produces tears. She took his tremulous hands in her own, and gently said:

"Dear, Sir, you must not mind this so much. It is only a fit of hysteria on the part of Mrs. Linden; she will soon be quieted, I trust."

"O, Ellinor, she is possessed by an evil spirit! Last night she wailed beside my door for hours, and no persuasions, no force, could keep her from it. Three times Ernest took her away, and yet she found means to evade him, and return. Ellinor, this woman is a curse, and a blight to our house. Why will not Ernest put her away? I have entreated him to do so; have offered him money, as much as can be called for, to provide for her elsewhere; but she refuses to go, and he *dares not* compel her. Yes, I live to utter the wretched truth that my son is evidently in the power of this woman-fiend, and fears to act contrary to her will."

Mrs. Euston was silent; she had seen this herself; she had heard Linden indirectly acknowledge as much, and she could say nothing in reply. She could only caress his withered hands, and show by her manner how deeply she sympathized with him. Her glance fell upon the portrait which had so long hung over the mantel, and she saw with surprise that its face was turned to the wall. Mr. Linden remarked it, and feebly said:

"I could no longer bear that those baleful eyes should follow me. I turned it this morning myself. I wish some one would take it away; it is not much like Amelia, but it is enough so to make me heart-sick. I remember the years that I sat beneath that picture, and contemplated it daily, as if it had been a shrined saint, dreaming of the time I yearned for, when we should all be re-united beneath the same roof, a complete and happy family. O, Nelly! it is hard to bear the bitterest sorrow and humiliation in the days of our old age! A few more months, and I shall pass away, with no peace, no joy, to illumine the setting of my sun. I shall leave behind me bitterness, strife and misery. *That* is the hardest thought of all. Nelly, my daughter, my heart's child, promise me that you will never withdraw your friendship from my poor Ernest. O, if *you* had been his wife, how different would have been his fate! Yet, I exulted in the great match I believed he had made, and you knew that I did so. Can you forgive me, Nelly, darling?"

There was something childishly plaintive in his manner of making this appeal, and Mrs. Euston raised his hand to her lips, as she replied: "I promise to be a friend, a sister, to Ernest as long as we both shall live."

"Thanks for this assurance, Nelly. Hark! what sound is that? She is coming! she is coming! I hear her steps; her hideous cries. Shut the door quick! lock it—lock it! She makes me ill—*she* destroys me!"

Steps were heard running rapidly down the stairs, and through the hall, and the wail that at intervals had filled the house, was now prolonged into a wild shriek that drew nearer every instant. Mr. Linden trembled violently, and sank back on his chair overcome with excitement. Before Ellinor could reach the door, it was violently thrown open, and Mrs. Linden rushed in, an awful vision she never forgot. She wore a scarlet dressing robe trimmed with ermine, which was torn away and fluttering in shreds from it; her black hair swept nearly to her feet, and was in the wildest disorder, while her face was convulsed with maniac passion. As she recognized Mrs. Euston she stopped suddenly, and said:

"So *you* have come to see me in the extremity of my degradation? The wretches in this house have drugged my food; they have made me mad by their persecutions, and now they insult me by sending for *you* to witness my wretchednesss. Old man, I will disgrace your son for this. Blind dotard, you shall never realize the wish that lies nearest to your heart, for I will heap such infamy upon your name, that *she* will refuse to bear it, even even after I am put out of the way. You and your son have poisoned me; I will bring the accusation against you both as soon as I am well enough to go out. That is, if I am ever permitted to regain my health again. Mrs. Euston, this accursed house is an Inferno which I advise you to avoid."

"I am not afraid to visit my old friends, and give them such comfort as they need," replied Mrs. Euston, resuming her position beside Mr. Linden, who seemed to be overcome with painful emotion. Mrs. Linden glared on her with an expression of savage rage, and stretched forth her hands as if she would gladly catch at her, and rend her in pieces. She viciously said:

"I hate you; you are the shadow on my path. You stand between me and the heart of my husband. He will not love me, because *you* look into his eyes and forbid it. Go away with your deceitful wiles. I—I abhor you, and I will —I must destroy you."

With the wild glare of insanity in her eyes, she sprang with a swift bound toward her intended victim with fingers extended and ready to clutch her throat and press the life from it, but as she sprang forward, a powerful arm was thrown around her, and Ernest, aided by one of the men servants, held her firmly in his grasp. The cries, and denunciations were terrible as she was borne from the room struggling violently to free herself. After a pause, Mrs. Euston tremulously asked:

"Is Mrs. Linden often thus?"

"She is constantly subject to violent fits of fury, but she has never been so unmanageable until lately. She absents herself from home for hours, and we none of us know whither she goes, or who she sees; after these visits, she is more turbulent, more exacting toward all of us, until life in this once peaceful house has become a restless dreariness, which I am beginning to find unbearable. Amelia's vagaries are undermining the health of my son and daughter, and they are rapidly killing me."

"I think that Mrs. Linden should be placed in a lunatic asylum, and treated for the mania from which she is evidently suffering."

"I have told Ernest the same thing, but he refuses to place her there. He *fears* to let her go from beneath his own eye. Oh! Nelly, what is the dire secret that bound these two together? That holds him the bond slave of such a woman as this?"

If there had been any reply to give to this oft repeated query, there was no time to utter it, for Linden himself, looking white and exhausted, returned to the room. He said:

"I came to apologize to you, Ellinor, for the very humiliating scene that occurred here just now. My poor Amelia is suffering from temporary insanity; she escaped from those in charge of her, and came hither to annoy you. I beg that you will pardon her violence, and forget whatever she may have said that was displeasing to you."

"I certainly shall not remember the ravings of delirium to her disadvantage, but I really think you risk a great deal in keeping Mrs. Linden in the house with your family. It is due to the peace of your father and sister that you put her under proper restraint until she has entirely recovered her health."

"I am fully aware of that, but she will not consent. I *cannot* remove her unless she does so."

Ellinor looked at him, and saw that fixed, marble look which indicates that the last verge of suffering is reached · she shivered with an indefinite dread that the crisis approached which would bring desolation and ruin to the friends she most dearly cherished, and she faintly said:

"Then advise your father and sister to remove to Ivy Cottage for a season. It is a familiar home to them, and they will at least find there the repose they so much need."

"And my poor old father must be driven from his own home by the creature I have brought into it!" exclaimed Linden, with a burst of passionate emotion. He rushed forward, threw himself upon his knees before the old man, and fervently said:

"Pardon me, my father! Cast me not out from your outraged heart, for I am more miserable than words may express. Go, I beg. Go, with our good angel, and leave this wretched Inferno, with its spirit of evil, to me and my despair!"

The venerable father placed his hands upon the bowed head, and tremulously said:

"Arise, Ernest, and nerve yourself anew to the task before you. I shall not leave you, my son, to bear your burden alone. I bless you, my boy; bless you fervently, and the good God will not always turn his face away in wrath. If you have sinned. you have repented; you are bearing the bitter penance, and we must not shrink from our share of the punishment. Thanks, Ellinor, for your kind offer; but you can best aid us by spending as much of your time as you can spare in this unhappy household. Your presence always comes to me as a soothing blessing."

Ernest arose, took her hand, and said:

"You will not refuse, Nelly? We all gain strength from your clear judgment, and serene temper I will not intrude myself upon you, and my unhappy wife shall be so strictly watched that the recurrence of the violent outbreak of this morning will be impossible."

"While they need me, my place is near your father and sister," replied Mrs. Euston; "and I need no entreaty to induce me to remain."

Thus it was settled, and a brief note was despatched to Clara, informing her that her mother would not be at home till late in the evening. A message was sent to Madeline, appointing another afternoon for the visit to her son's grave, and soon after, Mrs. Pierre came in for a parting call. When she found Clara alone she agreed to spend the remainder of the day with her.

Lumley called for her at twilight, but a little persuasion on the part of Miss Euston induced them to remain with her till the return of her mother.

The three spent a very lively evening together; the confederates were in the highest spirits at the prospect of the success of their nefarious scheme, and Clara soon felt the contagion of their gaiety. She thought Lumley less *brusque* than usual, and he good humoredly told her that as he had relinquished all of success in his suit to herself, she must henceforth class him among her best friends. He exerted himself to be agreeable, and never had Mrs. Pierre shone more brilliantly in the most *recherche* circles than on this evening in the quiet parlor of Mrs. Euston.

Clara regretted more than ever that she must so soon part from her perfidious friend, and she said, with a sigh.

"I wish that ma Nelly could have been prevailed upon to let me be the companion of your voyage. There is nothing that could have afforded me more pleasure."

A significant look passed between the two, and Mrs. Pierre said:

"Ah! *Clara mio*, that pleasure shall yet be yours. When I become your uncle's wife, your mother's scruples will be set at rest. Then I will claim you as my guest, and Mirandola shall put on its fairest looks to welcome you."

They parted with a promise to meet again on the steamer on the following afternoon; and Clara, unsuspicious and happy, went to her own room for the last time for many weary days; and was soon wrapped in the sound slumbers of youth and innocence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

At the hour appointed, Mr. Euston called for his niece, with a feeling of exultation at having out-generaled his sister-in-law, he saw the unsuspecting Clara enter the carriage with an expression of serene confidence in his protection, which should have been a severe reproach to his treachery

Mrs. Euston had returned home late on the previous night, and immediately after breakfast again went to Linden Place, to pass the day with its afflicted inmates. Thus Clara's maid was left to make her preparations for departure without suspicion, for her young lady was engaged with company all the morning, and the supervision of her wardrobe was left to the care of her attendant.

Kate had informed the household that she intended leaving in the afternoon, as her mother, who lived in New Jersey, was taken suddenly ill, and required her presence at home. Leave of absence was of course granted her, and she dextrously had the trunks taken away by a porter hired for the occasion, when the other domestics were engaged at their different duties, and could not comment on the singular fact that Kate should require two large trunks to take her clothing, on a brief visit to her sick mother.

Everything had been so carefully and quietly managed, that Clara had not a suspicion of the deception intended to be practiced upon her. When the reached the wharf at which the magnificent ship lay, steam was already up, and her flags were unfurled ready for departure. Clara said:

"I am afraid we are too late, uncle. I scarcely think it will be safe to venture on the steamer, for they might take us off."

"No danger of that, my dear. The captain is an old friend of mine, and would not serve me such a trick. Besides, it is their habit to keep up a great show of starting at least an hour before they actually leave. You will find your friend expecting you, and surely you would not permit her to go without bidding her farewell?"

"Not willingly, I must confess; and I must risk a little, I suppose, to see her once more. There she is now on the look-out for us."

As the carriage was slowly driven toward the gangway, Mrs Pierre was seen leaning over the railing fluttering her white handkerchief toward her friends. In a few moments Clara was safely beside her, and she exclaimed:

"Dear love, I am so glad to see your charming face once more; and your good uncle is welcome as the flowers in May. I have felt forlorn for the last half-hour, for Mr. Lumley had an engagement which prevented him from remaining till you came. I would not go below, but preferred sitting here to watch for your appearance. I am so glad you did not disappoint me."

"Now I am here, I am afraid I have only a moment to stay, for the steamer seems ready to bound away every instant."

"Oh, no, love; the captain assured me just now that we should not leave the wharf for some time yet. His freight has not yet all arrived. You must not be disappointed in the main object of coming down; you *must* see this beautiful palace, which one might fancy Aladdin planned in a moment of illumination from his wonderful lamp. Come, let us go into the cabin at once."

Clara looked toward her uncle, who nodded, and said, "You have plenty of time before you—go with your friend."

Thus re-assured, she entered a magnificent saloon, fitted up with the luxury of a palace, and amused and interested, she was lured on from moment to moment, until the sudden heaving of the floor beneath her feet gave her a shock of surprise, and she exclaimed:

"The ship is in motion! we have left the land! Oh, uncle, speak to the captain, and get him to let us on shore. Mamma will be so unhappy—so much annoyed. Indeed, indeed I *must*."

She seemed so much excited, so suddenly alarmed, that Mr. Euston thought it best to re-assure her until it was too late to insist on being restored to her mother. He quietly said:

"Do not needlessly excite yourself, Clara. There is some mistake. I will see the captain, and get it corrected. He will not refuse to do anything I wish. There, sit down, child, and be quiet. I will return immediately after speaking to him."

Clara sat down as he commanded, for she was trembling so violently that she could scarcely stand. A vague fear of evil had suddenly seized her; she remembered the singular warning against taking a sea voyage which she had so recently received, and she was resolved, if she could evade it, one should not be forced upon her. She looked appealingly at Mrs. Pierre, but she calmly said:

"Do not distress yourself, Clara; it will all be right. Remember that you are under the protection of your uncle, and he will not permit any evil to happen to you, even if the steamer has started on her voyage."

"But Ma Nelly will be so miserable. If I thought my uncle had played such a trick on me, I could hardly forgive him. He would not surely lend himself to such a deception?"

"My dear Clara, rest assured that your uncle will do nothing that is not for your ultimate interest and happiness. Rely on him, for he loves you very tenderly—is most anxious to promote your enjoyment in every possible manner."

"But I do not desire any enjoyment of which mamma disapproves. I hope that my uncle has not attempted to take me from my home without first obtaining my own consent to such a proceeding?"

"Hush, my love, here he comes; do not say what may deeply wound his feelings."

With a well simulated air of chagrin, Mr. Euston approached his niece, and said:

"You were right, Clara. The captain thought we were to be fellow passengers with our friend here, and has actually sailed with us on board. However, you need not feel annoyed on that account, for we can return in the pilot boat which takes the ship outside the bay. The night promises to be a little squally, but I dare say you will not mind that, if we can only get back home in safety."

"Oh, no, no! only get me back, and I shall be too thankful to find fault with the means employed. I shall have no fear of rough weather, for I had rather risk it, than give Ma Nelly the fright she will receive when she finds that I have not returned home. What time can we get back, uncle?"

"That is uncertain, Clara. Make yourself contented, child, and be sure that I will take good care of you. You should feel as safe with me as with your step-mother."

He spoke as if he was annoyed, and she regarded him gravely as she replied:

"She has never been a step-mother to me, uncle, and I never heard you call her such before. I would do nothing that she disapproves, even if you wished me to do it."

"I am fully aware of that, and that is one reason why I have——"

A warning gesture from Mrs. Pierre stopped the imprudent avowal he was about to make, and she caressingly took Clara's hand, as she said:

"I am selfish enough to rejoice in the mistake which assures to me a few hours more of your company, my dear young friend. Come with me into my state room, and take off your wrappings. You will be more comfortable without them, and besides, supper will soon be served."

Clara mechanically followed her; Mrs. Pierre removed her bonnet and cloak, smoothed her hair for her, and talked all the time in so agreeable a strain, that the young girl was insensibly beguiled by her fascinations into thinking how delightful it would be if she were really embarked on a voyage to the tropics, with the consent of her mother.

Presently the bell rang for supper, and they went out to an elegantly served table. There was a large number of passengers, and among them several gentlemen, who were acquaintances of Mr. Euston and his betrothed. On their return to the ladies' saloon, they came in to call on her, and be introduced to her young friend. Much lively conversation ensued, but at first Clara was pre-occupied, thinking painfully of the alarm with which her absence would fill her mother's heart; but gradually she was drawn within the charmed influence which hung around this woman as a spell, and she found herself talking gayly, and enjoying the passing moment, almost forgetful of the disagreeable position in which she was placed.

The hours sped on. It was surely time for the pilot to give up his charge. Once there was a brief pause in the onward career of the steamer, and, soon afterward, the increased motion assured Clara that she had reached the open sea. She looked around anxiously for her uncle, but he had left the saloon, and when she whispered to Mrs. Pierre:

"I am sure it is time for me to get ready to leave," that lady instantly replied:

"You need have no fears, Clara; your uncle will be sure to see you safely off the ship, when it is best for you to leave. Enjoy the present, dear, and let dull care be the portion of him whose duty it is to watch over you."

Half re-assured, thoughtless, and full of excitability, Clara was willing to repose confidence in her false friend, and the ship went bounding on her course, leaving land far behind her, while she laughed and chatted with the agreeable acquaintances she had just made.

At length it grew late; the gentlemen bade them good-night; the other lady passengers retired to their state-rooms, and Clara was left alone with Mrs. Pierre. She yawned, and indolently said:

"I wonder what can have become of Mr. Euston? Shall we venture on deck, and see where he is?"

"Had we not better send the stewardess to ask him to come to us? I am very anxious to know how long it will be before we set out on our return to New York."

"It will be quite safe to go ourselves, and I wish you to see night upon the ocean."

Clara timidly followed her, and in a few moments they stood on deck. She cast her eyes around, and in the vast dim profound, was startled to see no vestige of land. There was only the measureless ocean, stretching far, far away to the horizon's verge, where the stars seemed stooping to meet their counterparts mirrored in the lucid depths below. The deep blue concave was brilliant with them, for there was no moon to dim their lustre; but down toward the edge of the wide expanse, a thin, vapory haze was floating like wreaths of white mist. In the distance, a faint black speck was receding from them, and in the certainty that this was the pilot-boat in which she should have returned to the shore, Clara forgot the awe with which the grand scene before her had inspired her. She exclaimed, in a distressed voice:

"I am upon the wide—wide sea, and yonder flies the boat my uncle promised me to return in. O, what does this mean?—What *can* it mean?"

A gruff voice spoke beside her:

"It only means, Miss Euston, that your uncle had no mind to risk your life and his own, by venturing upon that little craft in the face of a coming storm. Look at those filmy clouds yonder: in a few hours they will fill the heavens with wrath, and the wind will blow like great guns. I advised your uncle not to risk taking you back on that cockle-shell yonder. If she escapes the storm now brewing, it will be a miracle?"

"And we?—what is to become of us?" asked the young girl, appalled by the idea of a storm at sea.

"O, *we* are staunch and tight. We shall outrun the violence of the gale, and only feel its lightest breathings, while that boat runs into its very teeth. Be assured, young lady, that we will take good care of you, and your uncle will be answerable for all the rest."

At this point in their conversation, Mr. Euston joined them, and said:

"The captain has told you how it happened that I dared not keep my promise to you, Clara. Come out of the night air, and I will explain all that seems mysterious to you in your present position."

In silent consternation Clara followed him. When the three were again in the saloon, he caressingly said:

"Would it be so very displeasing to you, my dear niece, to find that I have deceived you purposely, that I may afford you a pleasant trip, on which, I had reason to believe, your heart was once set? You are on your way to Cuba, Clara, to be present at my marriage with your friend. By this time your mother knows where you are, and that I alone am to blame in bringing you away without her consent. I trust, my love, that my efforts to give you a pleasant surprise will not be rewarded with ingratitude."

Clara burst in tears, in spite of all her efforts to retain composure.

"Oh! Uncle George, how could you do this? Poor mamma! she will come after me—I know she will; for she will never have a moment's peace till she holds me in her arms again."

"Clara, this is silly. Was a daughter never separated from her mother before, that you make such a fuss about it? *My* protection, and that of my future wife, is surely sufficient to satisfy your fastidious mother. Wipe your eyes, and make the best of it now, for the trip you are bound to take. My wedding will be a sufficient excuse for it to your friends. Come, cheer up. I know you will enjoy it when this first burst of annoyance is over. I really thought I was doing something especially agreeable to you in getting you off so cleverly. You will find your maid in your state-room, with such things as you will need. Go, and sleep in peace, child; and wake up to-morrow in a mood to forgive and thank me for what I have done."

"I, too, must ask forgiveness, darling Clara; for I joined in the plot for carrying you off with me. I love you so much that I could not bear to give you up; and I had promised you that you should be present at my wedding. See—this was the only means of keeping my pledge, for we shall be married immediately on our arrival at Mirandola."

Clara permitted herself to be soothed and reconciled to the voyage before her; and the certainty that her mother knew how she had been entrapped in so unceremonious a departure, went far toward consoling her. The brighter side of the picture arose before her youthful imagination, and she began to think how charming it was, after all, to visit the land of the orange and the myrtle in such attractive companionship. Some consideration was due to Mrs. Pierre, too, for she was soon to stand in a near and dear relationship to her; and Clara wiped away her tears, and half smiled, as she said:

"I will try and not be ungrateful, uncle, for I am sure you thought only of affording me pleasure; though I must confess that I should have preferred accompanying you in a more legitimate manner. I will do my best to enjoy the voyage you have secured for me. Good night; I will seek my state-room, and try and arrange my thoughts."

"No, darling—rest, repose, are what you need," said the caressing voice of Mrs. Pierre. "Lose your own regrets, my Clara, in the certainty that nothing could have afforded me more sincere satisfaction than to have you with me on my return to my own home. Good night, love. May guardian angels watch over your slumbers."

She kissed her tenderly, and her uncle also did the same. He affectionately said:

"Be comforted, Clara, for I would have you do nothing that can affect your future disadvantageously. Are you not my brother's child? and am I not bound by every feeling of honor to guard you from injury as carefully as if you were my own? Good night, and slumbers light, my love. Don't be too hard on poor Kate, for she only obeyed my orders in getting your things away from the house."

Clara found her maid in a state of considerable trepidation at the view she might take of the part she had played; but the girl had been her attendant several years, and her young lady was too much attached to her to be very severe on her for the deception she had practised. In fact, the sudden freshening of the wind, and thr increased motion of the ship, made her rathee anxious to get safely in her berth, where she wept herself to sleep with a vague feeling of forlornness and insecurity, in spite of the presence of her uncle, and the honeyed assurances of Mrs. Pierre.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

ADVANTAGE is a better soldier than rashness.

THE THRONE MID THE PLEASURE OF HOMES

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

See, old hale hearty Winter is with us again!
How he stalks in his glee o'er the bleak, snowy plain!
How he blows his cold fingers, nor cares that his beard
To sonorous grand marches by tempest is stirred,
While his cloud-mantle, wove by the wild mountain-storm,
Streams majestical back from his right royal form;
Then hurrah for Old Winter!

II.

O we pine not for sweet, dewy Spring, with her flowers;
Nor for rosy-lipped Summer, at ease in her bowers;
Nor for gold-mantled Autumn, bowed down by her sheaves,
As she walks to the barn in the cool yellow eves;
No! we pine not for them by the homestead or fell,
For old hale hearty Winter has beauty as well:
Then hurrah for Brave Winter!

III.

Hist!—he blows on the window in good honest glee
Can't you mark that a warm-*hearted* fellow is he?
How he laughs to see parents and children at play
Round the cheerful red grate in the closing of day!
See his eyes—how they snap at their innocent mirth,
And this shows of itself that he's laurel'd with worth:
Then hurrah for Kind Winter!

IV.

O 'tis sweet and 'tis noble with Spring-Time to be
In the green-sprouting glen, by the fresh-breathing sea;
Or with Summer to stray mid the flowery throng;
Or with Autumn to warble the rich Harvest-Song;
But old Winter is dearest, however you roam,
For his sacred throne stands mid the pleasures of *home!*
Then hurrah for kind Winter!
Dear, kind, homely Winter!
Old Winter! Hale Winter,
The dearest of all!

THE STEPMOTHER;

OR,

WHO'S TO WIN.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "RICHARD HOFFMAN," "STANFIELD HALL, "MINNIGREY," ETC. ETC. ETC.

[In order that new subscribers, who have not read any of this story, may understand it from this point, we give a synopsis of what has already been published:—Sir Barnard Gaston, the leading character thus far in this story, was a proud, cold-hearted tyrant. By his first marriage he had two children, Albert and Maude. His second wife, the Lady Alicia, who is the "Step-Mother" of the tale, being anxious that her own offspring, Egbert and Laura, should inherit the title and wealth of Sir Barnard, managed to compass the death of Albert, and succeeded in alienating Sir Barnard's affections from Maude. The baronet also kept Maude ignorant of the fact that she was heiress, in her own right, of a valuable estate known as Penswick; but Maude being informed of her rights by a couple of tenants—Gill Gervaise and his wife Cis, who had been kindly treated by Maude's mother—she rebelled; Sir Barnard had her confined in a lonely country house, where Lord Cheverly, one of the Ministers of the Crown, accidentally met, fell in love with, and married her, to the great consternation and chagrin of Sir Barnard and Lady Alicia. Laura afterwards married a rich old nobleman, named Musgrave, and became disgraced by an intrigue with a disreputable character. Her husband dying, left the bulk of his property to Edward Gaston, a cousin and former suitor of Maude's, from whom she had been estranged by a plot of Egbert Gaston's, who had secretly married a girl named Bella Harding in the name of *Edward*. Subsequently Egbert, at the command of his father, married a rich gentlewoman—his marriage with her, of course, being an act of bigamy, and void in law. As fate would have it, Bella was afterwards engaged as the nurse of Lydia—Egbert's acknowledged wife—during the early infancy of Lydia's first-born. Bella was soon afterwards murdered by Humphrey Skillett, keeper of Wicksal workhouse, (situated near Moultree, the home of Sir Barnard Gaston, on whose grounds the deed was done,) and Miles Goring, the keeper of an inn in the neighborhood, known as the Travellers' Rest—the murder being committed to get possession of certain papers which Bella wore on her person. Bella left a son, who was taken under the care of Maude and Lord Cheverly, Edward Gaston, who had become a lawyer of the Temple, and Collin Craw, once a poor boy in Wicksal workhouse, but who had become a lawyer of high reputation, and who, on account of services rendered to Maude, had been aided by Lord Cheverly. This son of Bella's was of course the direct heir of the Gaston estates, although after the death of Bella, Egbert had privately married Lydia over again so as to legitimate their union. Egbert and his mother, becoming estranged from Sir Barnard, attempted to penetrate his secret chamber at Moultree, where they understood he kept a casket containing dire secrets, which if known to them would place him in their power. But Egbert was killed in the attempt, and the casket was stolen and carried off by a London locksmith named Andrews, whom Lady Alicia had employed to make the keys wherewith to penetrate the secret chamber. Sir Barnard, suspecting Andrews, went to him to recover the casket; but the locksmith asking £5000 for it, Sir Barnard had him abducted by a tool named Hyams, and placed at West Lodge on his estate, in charge of Humphrey Skillett and Miles Goring, who in their efforts to torture the secret of the casket's hiding-place out of him, reduced him to a shrivelled idiot. Sir Barnard, failing in this attempt on Andrews, set about buying his house in London, in hopes of finding the casket concealed there, but Edward Gaston secretly forestalled him in the purchase, and he was again foiled. In the course of time, Hugh Gaston, the son of Egbert and Lydia was sent to school at Woodfall rectory, where the son of Egbert and Bella, under the name of William Earl, was attending, and William having saved Hugh's life, a strong attachment sprang up between the boys. About this time, Sir Barnard discovered that William Earl was the son of Egbert and Bella, and resolved to put him where he could never interfere with the prospects of Hugh. How he did it, the reader will learn in the following chapter.]

CHAPTER XLIX.

> Oh, there is one affection which no stain
> Of earth can ever darken. PERCIVAL.

Although the boyhood of William Earl had been most carefully watched, and everything that could contribute to his happiness bestowed with a lavish hand, one dark cloud obscured the otherwise bright horizon of his young existence—the utter ignorance in which he had been kept of all that concerned his family. As time rolled on, his feelings became morbidly sensitive upon the subject, and every year augmented them. His schoolfellows, on their return from their holidays, had a hundred proofs to produce of parental love, of brotherly and sisterly affection—of home, with its hallowed influences and loves!

He had not one, and the reflection pained him.

True, he had gifts to show, and costly ones; but not the little heart histories to relate which add tenfold to their value.

We pity the boy—and, we may add, the man — who has not the memory of his mother's kiss to cheer and sustain him in life's struggles.

In Hugh our hero found a ready listener to his sorrows, which became lighter in being shared by a friend who understood his feelings, and sympathized with them.

"It is sad," observed the supposed heir of Moultree. "I know what loneliness of heart means, and yet I am more favored than you are. Wait till I am a man, and can emancipate myself from the harsh control of Sir Barnard! My mother shall then become yours. I promise it."

"But it will not be my own mother," replied William, with a sigh.

"And yet you love me like a brother," said Hugh, half reproachfully.

There is something extremely beautiful in the confidence of youth; it has no mistrust—no shadow. The bitter lessons of experience have not chilled its warm, expansive, sunny glow. In after life, even with the best of us, it is confidence with a doubt—trust with an *if;* that terrible drawback to our happiness:—

> Oh, were not this a world of bliss,
> If falsehood lurked not 'neath its flowers,
> Leaving its poison on each kiss,
> The serpent's trail through Eden's bowers.

If the friendship of the two boys excited observation, it provoked neither jealousy nor ill-feeling in their schoolfellows, who were all too much attached to William to show even a momentary discontent at the marked preference he displayed for the society of his new friend—a preference which, after all, only separated him occasionally from them.

At all their regular sports and matches he was constant in his attendance, eager and active as ever.

Wednesday, according to the good old tradition, was invariably a half holiday with the pupils at Woodfall Rectory, and the boys were engaged at cricket, the noblest, manliest game that ever contributed to the growth of English pluck and muscle. The friends had been chosen in on different sides, and William, as usual, placed by his captain as long-stop.

It was glorious to hear the loud, cheerful, health-ringing laugh of the youngsters—the shouts of applause that followed some unusually clever play or bowling. The points of the game were as eagerly discussed by them as at a match at Lord's, or a contest against the "eleven."

Excited by the enthusiastic cheers of his companions, Hugh, who held the bat, made one of those extraordinary lucky hits which startle the bystanders from a mere tyro—the ball flew over the hedge, and the long-stop, with an involuntary "bravo!" bounded after it. He had sent back the ball, and was about to follow, when a respectable-looking female, who had been silently watching the game from the road, pronounced his name.

"What do you want with me, my good woman?" demanded the youth, flushed with excitement.

"You are William Earl, then?"

"Of course I am. Did not you know it?"

"Stay," said the female, as the youth was about to clear the hedge; "I must speak with you."

"You must make haste, then. Bravo, Willis," he shouted, as one of his side caught Hugh out.

Up went the ball, with a general cheer from the outs.

In his eagerness, William forgot the stranger—everything but the game, and once more prepared himself for a spring, when the words of the woman a second time arrested his attention.

"If you feel more interest in the game than in listening to intelligence that nearly concerns you, go, young gentleman," she exclaimed; "the opportunity may not occur again."

"Intelligence that concerns me!" repeated our hero, greatly astonished.

"Yes."

"You are jesting with me!"

"Those who sent me rarely jest," was the reply.

"But how can it concern me?"

"True," murmured the female, half aloud; "he was too young to recollect his mother."

Had a pistol been discharged close to his ear, the youth could not have started more suddenly. The game, the field, his schoolfellows, all disappeared in an instant, and, breathless with expectation, he remained gazing on the speaker as upon some oracle, for her words had touched the chord within his heart, to which his secret feelings and regrets responded.

"If you know anything respecting my parents—can afford me a clue, no matter how slight, to the mystery which, from childhood, has surrounded me—for pity's sake relieve my aching heart by imparting it. I will recompense you. Take my purse—it is not much; but here is my watch, and——"

"No, no!" interrupted the wife of Miles Goring (for—as our readers, doubtless, have suspected—it was the agent of Sir Barnard, who had thus accosted him); "I am not so bad, so heartless, as to rob you."

Could her husband have heard her, he would have been far from participating in her scruples.

"Besides," she added, "I am paid already"

"By whom?" demanded William, with a bewildered look.

"One who has the nearest claim upon your affection—one who ardently desires to see you," replied the messenger. "But the visit must be secret."

"Why secret?" demanded our hero. "Concealment implies shame; and I have the word of one whose life is truth, that there is nothing in my birth for me to blush for."

"But there may be danger," urged Mrs. Goring.

"I do not fear it," answered the youth, proudly.

"Not for yourself," observed the messenger, who, to do her justice, loathed the task imposed upon her, "but to the friend—the true friend of your *mother!* You may believe me."

At the words "*your mother*," the confidence of William Earl returned. He would have believed anything, however wild or improbable, uttered under the sanction of that hallowed name.

"I do believe you!" he exclaimed, "for you are human, and cannot have the heart to trifle with the feelings of a son. Who is this friend?"

"In a few minutes you may see him."

"So near?"

"At the neighboring village," replied the woman. "Reasons, he will, doubtless, explain, render it imprudent for him to see you at the rectory. A carriage is waiting for you at the end of the lane; will you accompany me?"

"Without informing my kind tutor?" said the youth.

"Without informing any one! In an hour or two you can return. If you still doubt me," added the agent of his wily grandfather, "I have but one proof more to urge."

"A proof?"

Mrs. Goring pointed to his shoulder.

"Imprinted by nature at your birth," she said.

"I am satisfied! Yes, quite satisfied," murmured the poor boy, greatly agitated. "Yes, that is indeed a proof! It is not late, and, as you say, in an hour or two I can be back. Where is the carriage? I am quite ready to accompany you."

At this moment a loud shout rose from the other side of the hedge, and the voices of his side calling him by name.

"I cannot stay to explain. Haste!" he exclaimed, "I am ready."

With an impatient step, our hero followed his guide to the end of the lane, where a handsome carriage with post horses was waiting. Without a word or a thought of hesitation, he jumped in and the woman followed him. A half-stifled cry accompanied by a brutal chuckle was heard. The blinds were drawn up and the vehicle drove off.

The disappearance of William not only put an end to the cricket, but created first surprise and then alarm in his schoolfellows. Had Hugh been with him, in all probability they would not have looked upon it as extraordinary.

"Nonsense!" said Willis, in answer to some suggestion. "He can't have gone far; and as for danger, what danger can Earl possibly run? every one knows and loves him in the neighborhood. Depend upon it he will be the first to laugh at the fright he has given us. Let us separate ourselves, we shall soon hunt him out."

The proposal was agreed to, and the boys dispersed themselves in every direction; some penetrated the wood, others sought the river side, thinking he might have taken a bath, but Hugh, the terrified Hugh, hastened to their favorite haunt, the old churchyard, in the hope of finding him, and yet could scarcely believe that William would have gone there without him.

A hasty search convinced him that his friend was not there—a feeling of sickness, a vague presentiment that something terrible had occurred, came over him, and he threw himself upon the old tombstone, where they had so frequently sat together, and wept bitterly.

It was past the usual hour when the pupils returned in detached parties to the rectory. To the report of the first who arrived, that William Earl was missing, the worthy clergyman paid but slight attention, deeming it one of those boyish escapades which the best conducted lads sometimes indulge in. But when the last batch arrived without bringing the slightest intelligence of their absent companion, he began to feel alarmed, and sent the footman and gardener both in search of him.

"He cannot have lost his way," said the rector. "There is not one amongst you better acquainted with the country than William."

"Perhaps his guardian has sent for him," exclaimed one of the boys.

"Or he has sprained his ancle in leaping!"

"Or fallen asleep in the old churchyard!"

"I sought him there," said Hugh, who, pale as death, sat listening to the suggestions of the speakers, "but could not find him."

"I do not think," observed the tutor, looking at his watch, "there is any great reason to be alarmed at present. It wants eight minutes to ten! *He must be back soon!*"

Hugh turned aside his face to conceal his tears; he could not shake off the presentiment that seized upon his mind in the churchyard.

Nearly another hour elapsed befor the rector spoke again; his patience was worn out, and he began to feel seriously uneasy. Had he known the history of his favorite pupil, his uneasiness would have changed to terror; but neither Collin Craw, who acted as the ostensible guardian of William, nor the Templar, had considered it necessary to disclose it.

"This is inexplicable," he muttered to himself. "The antecedents of the youth forbid me to suppose his absence is a voluntary one.

"You had better retire to rest," he added, speaking aloud. "Doubtless, before morning, the mystery will be cleared up."

The boys one and all declared it would be impossible to sleep till they knew what had become of their lost schoolfellow.

It was near midnight before the two servants returned from their search. The instant they appeared, the lads crowded around them, and eagerly demanded the news.

"Master Earl has been carried off," replied the footman.

"Carried off!" repeated the boys, with astonishment. "By whom?"

"A post-chay and four," said the gardener, greatly excited; for William was beloved by all the household.

His master requested the old man to calm himself, and, after some trouble, elicited the fact, that Farmer Burrel saw Master Earl and some female enter a carriage, which had been waiting for several hours at the end of the May Lane, and drive off.

"Why, I saw him speaking to a woman in the road, just after the famous hit Hugh made," exclaimed one of the boys.

"Did any violence appear to be used?" inquired the rector.

"No, sir."

"And which way did they drive?"

"Towards London."

"His guardian, probably, had been taken ill, or desired to see him upon some sudden emergency," observed the clergyman, "and very likely sent his housekeeper or some confidential servant for him."

"Burrel says she looked like a housekeeper, or something of that kind," said the footman.

"And so ends our romance and uneasiness," observed his master, who felt anxious his pupils should retire to rest. "No doubt there is some stupid messenger in the case, who has lost either Mr. Craw's letter to me, or delivered it at the wrong house. To bed with you, boys! and, in consideration of the fright we have all had, I shall dispense with exercises before breakfast."

The speaker had another reason—he intended to ride over, as soon as it should be daybreak, and question Farmer Burrel himself.

Satisfied with the explanation, which, after all, was the only feasible one, William's schoolfellows went to their rooms, and all but Hugh soon slept; he placed himself at the window of his little chamber, which looked upon the lawn, in the faint hope of witnessing the return of his friend.

Just as the first streak of morn crimsoned the horizon, he saw the rector's horse led from the stables.

"He does not believe that his guardian has sent for him," murmured the affectionate boy. "It was only said to induce us to retire to rest."

In a few minutes the clergyman appeared, and rode off quickly, casting his eyes, as he disappeared, towards the windows of his pupils' sleeping-rooms. Hugh drew back that he might not observe him.

At breakfast, the curate, who also acted as second master, received a note from the rector, informing him that he deemed it necessary to proceed at once to London, and desiring him to keep the pupils as quiet as possible.

As our readers may suppose, but little was done in the way of study that day.

When the Reverend Edward Hansler presented himself at the office of Collin Craw, the latter perceived, at a glance, that something unusual had occurred. The first impression was that his ward was ill, or had met with some accident.

"Don't be alarmed," said his visitor, perceiving his agitation—a request which, as is usual in such cases, greatly increased it.

"Pray use no management with me," exclaimed the lawyer, "but let me know the worst at once; nothing can be more dreadful than suspense."

"William has disappeared."

His affectionate guardian sank back into his chair, completely overwhelmed by the shock.

"We have sought him everywhere," added the clergyman. "The circumstances attending it are so singular that I lost not an hour in coming over to inform you. Rouse yourself, my dear sir; for Heaven's sake, rouse yourself. It is not by giving way to our feelings that we can recover him."

"You are right. Thank you; thank you for the lesson," exclaimed Collin, recovering his self-possession by a violent effort. "The heart is weak, and requires it. And so William has fallen at last into the hands of his unnatural enemy?"

"I never knew that he had an enemy," observed the rector, greatly surprised.

"True! true! I am punished for my want of confidence," muttered the lawyer; "but you must forgive me that. I am calm, quite calm, now," he continued, after drinking a glass of water. "Let me hear every circumstance; omit no detail, however trifling."

As briefly as possible, his visitor related all that he had gleaned from Burrel respecting the disappearance of William.

"He entered the carriage willingly?" said Collin, musingly.

"The farmer declares so."

"Then some infernal scheme must have been used to snare him!" exclaimed his guardian; "my name, perhaps, employed to lure him to destruction!"

As he made the last suggestion the voice of the speaker faltered.

"I ought to have foreseen and warned him," he added, in a tone of self-reproach.

"The suggestion that your name has been employed to lure him away is not unlikely," answered the rector. "What alarms me most is the declaration of Burrel, that the instant the poor boy entered the carriage the blinds were drawn; but surely," he added, "there can be no fear of personal violence. If so, immediate action——"

Collin Craw stood with his face buried in his hands, striving to collect his thoughts. When he withdrew them, his features, though exceedingly pale, were no longer agitated; he appeared a different man.

"I must request you to accompany me to the Temple," he said, in a tone of decision; "perhaps, also, before a magistrate, to make oath of this detestable, unnatural outrage."

"Willingly."

"I felt sure you would."

A coach was ordered, and in a few minutes the speakers were seated in the chambers of Edward Gaston, who, on hearing what had occurred, betrayed scarcely less agitation than Collin himself had shown.

"What do you suggest?" he said, addressing the latter.

"William must be recovered," replied his guardian, firmly; "no matter how painful the exposure, how noble the name that will be compromised. If too late to save him," he added, with vehemence, "he shall be avenged, if I drag Sir Barnard to justice with my own hands."

At the name of the baronet, the clergyman looked surprised; it was the first clue he had obtained to the mystery.

"You are right," replied the Templar, solemnly; "and, despite the tie of blood between us, I will aid you. But we must first consult Lord Cheverly."

In a hastily written note, the speaker informed his lordship what had occurred, and requested the favor of a visit from him at his chambers.

Deeply as Edward Gaston felt interested in the fate of our hero, his feelings were not like those of Collin, who had watched over the youth from infancy. To the successful, plodding lawyer his ward was the being that linked him to an ideal existence. For so many years he had acted the part of a parent to him, that he ended by loving him like one.

"Deeply as this is to be deplored," said the Templar, musingly, "and greatly as it will disconcert our plans, I do not think we need be seriously alarmed for his safety."

Collin smiled bitterly.

"The health of Hugh is too delicate," added the speaker, in an undertone, "for his grandfather to risk the hope of his race upon *one life.*"

The guardian of William started. An idea, probably, had suddenly struck him, for he rose hastily to quit the chamber.

"Where are you going?" demanded Edward.

"I cannot explain now."

"But we expect Lord Cheverly?"

"I shall return in an hour."

With this laconic observation the speaker disappeared—impatience, hope, and confidence expressed in every feature.

Although it was late in the day before Lord Cheverly arrived, Collin had not returned. The peer, as might be expected from his manly, honorable character, expressed the most profound indignation at the unnatural conduct of his father-in-law, and yet appeared at a loss how to act.

"Surely," suggested the rector, "the course is easy. If Sir Barnard Gaston is really the author of this outrage, a warrant might be——"

"You do not understand the difficulty," interrupted Edward; "my uncle is the boy's legal guardian."

"His grandfather," added his lordship.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the astonished clergyman. "Hugh and William, then, are cousins?"

"Brothers."

As briefly as possible they put the reverend gentleman in possession of such outlines of the facts as enabled him to comprehend the motives of the baronet and his pupil's danger.

"Thus you see, my dear sir," continued the Templar, "how necessary it is to employ caution in our proceedings. If we attempt to remove William from him by legal means, he meets us with his right of guardianship, which no authority in England except the Chancellor's can set aside. If we apply for a warrant, the magistrate will naturally ask for evidence of some motive on the part of Sir Barnard.

"Either way, the case is beset with difficulties."

"If I may advise," said the peer, "you will proceed at once to Moultree, accompanied by Craw. I have great faith in his acuteness, and still more in the strong affection he bears his ward. My secretary, Hector O'Moore, shall go with you."

When Collin arrived he highly approved of the arrangement, but declared that it was impossible for him to leave London before the following morning, and requested the rector to remain at Edward's chambers till the arrival of his clerk, who would take down his statement in writing, and accompany him afterwards before a magistrate to swear to it.

Neither his lordship nor the Templar quite comprehended the necessity of this proceeding; but such was their confidence in his judgment, that neither of them disputed nor questioned him upon the subject.

These proceedings so occupied the worthy clergyman's time, that the shades of evening had fallen before he reached his home, where a second and equally painful surprise awaited him. Hugh had disappeared in a manner as unaccountable as his friend had done, and left no trace behind him. All that the inquiries of his tutor elicited amounted to the solitary fact that a chaise had been seen waiting at the end of the same lane as the carriage in which William had been carried off.

Wearied and terrified by this second blow, the worthy man returned once more to London, to advise with Collin and the Templar.

It was too late; they had already started on their journey to Moultree, and he had nothing left but to follow them.

CHAPTER L.

Cross purposes are dangerous when two
Of equal skill play at them.

When William Earl entered the carriage, to which he had been so cleverly allured, he was startled by the sinister appearance of the inmate; and, with that instinctive sense of self-preservation whose action forestalls the conclusion of reason, would have drawn back; but it was too late; the iron grasp of Miles Goring was fixed upon his collar, and he found himself dragged to the seat beside him.

"Jump up!" exclaimed the ruffian to his wife, whose conscience bitterly reproached her for the part she had played.

"What means this violence?" demanded our hero, more indignant at the outrage, perhaps, than seriously alarmed by it.

"Jump up, you fool," repeated Miles, "unless you want to be left behind."

The woman hesitated no longer, but sprang into the vehicle, and closed the door.

"Let me out!" exclaimed William. "I have been deceived; help! help——"

The cries of the youth were speedily stifled by the folds of a large cloak, which the agent of his grandfather threw over his head; while, to prevent observation, his wife drew down the blinds of the carriage, which was being driven at a rapid pace towards London.

"You are stifling him, Miles," observed Mrs. Goring.

The ruffian only laughed at her remonstrance. His nature was naturally brutal, and he experienced a sort of savage pleasure in holding the youth, like a captive bird, in his fierce grasp. The struggles of his prisoner amused him.

"Take the cloak from his face," added his wife, with womanly feeling; "remember, your instructions were to use no unnecessary violence."

"I aint a usin' none," quietly remarked her husband.

"You will be hanged for murder, Miles; I always predicted it."

This, perhaps, was the only threat that could shake the nerve of Miles; entreaties would have been of little use, in fact, he rather enjoyed them; but any allusion to hanging upset his stolid equanimity.

Cautiously and slowly he removed the cloak from the head of William, whom he discovered, to his terror, to be senseless.

"I told you so!" exclaimed the woman, bursting into tears. "You have killed him! and I am worse than you are for the part I played."

"Silence!" muttered the terrified ruffian, between his teeth; "he has only fainted."

By dint of chafing his hands and throat, and letting down one of the windows of the carriage, the speakers succeeded in restoring the victim of their treachery to consciousness.

"Where am I?" he murmured, looking wildly around him.

"You speak," whispered Miles; "he don't like my voice."

"In bad hands," answered Mrs. Goring, with more honesty than discretion; "but not so bad as you think. Promise not to call for assistance again, and no further violence shall be offered."

"I can't promise," answered the high-spirited boy.

"Can't yer?" said the ruffian, preparing to envelope his head in the cloak again.

"By what right have you taken me from my friends?" demanded William; "let me return to them, and this outrage may be pardoned; carry it further, and you will find every means my guardian can devise set in action to bring you to punishment."

"I aint afeard on him," replied the ex-landlord of the Travellers' Rest. "Miles Goring is as good a man as any lawyer, and has gotten as good friends to back him, too."

Finding it impossible to move the ruffian, either by entreaties or expostulations, to permit him to return to the rectory, William, by the advice of the woman, consented, at last, to give his word that he would make no further attempts to raise an alarm.

Collecting his thoughts as well as he could under such circumstances, our hero rapidly reviewed the position he found himself placed in.

The rector would soon be aware of his absence, and communicate it to his guardian.

He trusted to their united efforts to release him.

The rector, he considered, by this time, must be aware of his absence, and he trusted to his energy and perseverance to rescue him.

Instead of passing through London, the carriage made a détour, and took the road to Devonshire.

As it is not necessary for the progress of our story, to detail stage by stage the forced journey of our hero, we may as well inform our readers at once that, after travelling with the utmost celerity for three days and nights, the prisoner arrived at West Lodge.

"He looks plaguy sickly," observed Humphrey Skillet, who had passed the greater portion of his time at the house, to look after Andrews, and get everything in readiness to receive them.

"Tired," answered Miles.

"Or ill usage," mentally added his partner in rascality, knowing the speaker's naturally brutal temper.

"I hope it is nothing else, for your sake," he said, speaking aloud; "the orders to treat him well were most particular."

"Tell me," said their prisoner, looking around him, "why am I brought here? What possible motive can Sir Barnard Gaston have for separating me from my friends?"

"You have been pratin', have yer?" exclaimed Goring, shaking his clenched hand in the face of his wife.

"No, Miles, not a word—not a syllable."

"It's no use a-lyin'. I didn't tell."

Little as the woman deserved such consideration at his hands, the manly spirit of William revolted at the idea of her being beaten, and he at once explained the source of his information by pointing to the armorial bearings carved on the oak-panelled walls. He had noticed the same device on the seal of Hugh.

"What does he mean," demanded Goring, "by a-starin' and a-pointin' to them things?"

His companion, better informed upon such subjects than himself, explained to him.

William was conducted to his prison chamber, the room formerly occupied by Andrews, where, to his surprise, he found not only a cheerful fire but an excellent repast, thanks to the care of Humphrey Skillet. Not that pity or remorse had anything to do with the arrangement—he was incapable of feeling either; it was in obedience to the express command of the baronet.

No sooner had his goalers locked him in the room than the poor boy, forgetting both hunger and fatigue, and urged by the instinctive love of freedom, sprang towards the window.

It was strongly barred.

"Heaven help me!" he exclaimed—"my last hope is in the energy of my friends; I am helpless here. What can be the motive of Sir Barnard's extraordinary conduct to me? How have I offended him? Not by saving the life of Hugh? No, that is impossible."

Since the discovery of the hands into which he had fallen, the mind of William became comparatively easy. The grandfather of his friend could have no interest in his death, he considered, and his worst fears were removed.

The idea suddenly struck him that he had been mistaken for Hugh; and it was not till he recollected the allusion made by the woman to the peculiar mark upon his shoulder that he abandoned it.

Worn out at last, the captive threw himself upon the bed, and soon forgot his cares, dangers and fatigues in the sweetest of all restoratives—sleep.

No sooner had our hero been consigned to his prison, than the two goalers seated themselves at the table in the hall to indulge in their potations. Mrs. Goring was dismissed, and the only witness remaining was the unfortunate locksmith, who, with his usual idiotic laugh, lay rolling, chuckling and muttering half broken sentences before the fire.

There was something horrible in the expression of his features as the light of the hearth fell on it.

"You have had a fatiguing journey," observed Humphrey Skillet, pouring out some of Hyams' Schiedam; "but I suppose you are well paid for it."

"Not a farthing too much," observed Miles, sullenly, "considerin' all things—the missus and me—all them long hours in a stiflin' coach. Maybe Sir Barnard'll be more liberal *for the rest.*"

His companion regarded him with an inquiring look.

"What do you mean by 'the rest?'" he demanded.

"How green yer are!" added the speaker, at the same time pointing significantly to the staircase leading to the tower.

"Why, yer do not suppose that?"

The ex-landlord of the Travellers' Rest interrupted him by a coarse laugh.

"Of course I does. Yer don't suppose the baronet caught the starlin' only for the pleasure of caging and hearing him talk, do yer?"

"What else?"

"Why, to wring his neck, to be sure."

At this moment the poor crippled idiot uttered one of his boisterous chuckles, and rolled and tumbled in the most grotesque fashion before the fire.

"Silence, Zach!" exclaimed Goring, kicking him.

"You are wrong," said Humphrey, as he puffed the whiffs with an air of great deliberation from his pipe. "Sir Barnard won't hurt a hair of his head."

"Why not?"

"'Cos he is his own grandson."

To this assertion Miles replied only by a look of incredulity.

"It will turn out as I say," continued the speaker. "Have you forgotten the girl that stopped at the Travellers' Rest, now fourteen years ago?"

"Whom you threw into the lake?"

"Hush!" cried Skillet, turning deadly pale.

"Pooh! only Zach can hear us," grumbled his confederate, "and he's an idiot, aint yer, Zach, eh, old boy?"

The wretched cripple gibbered in a manner that was perfectly unintelligible.

"There, aint yer satisfied?" added the speaker. "But what makes yer think so?"

"How was the missus told to inveigle the boy?"

Miles pointed to his shoulder.

"And by that same sign," continued Humphrey, "I know him to be the son of the girl you did for."

"You, yer mean?"

"Well, well, we will not dispute about a word."

The murderer of the ill-fated Bella, when alluding to the fatal deed, invariably spoke of it as the act of both.

Legally, perhaps, it was so.

"So you see," he continued, "bad as Sir Barnard is, he will never take the life of his own grandchild."

"Well," said Miles, deliberately, "maybe not—and maybe——"

"Never!" repeated his confederate, emphatically. "He has done strange things in his time, but, hang him, he is not so bad as that."

The carouse of the speakers was continued to a late hour, during which they quarrelled twice, and made friends again.

When they retired, they left the maimed and idiotic victim of their brutality sleeping soundly before the fire.

Decidedly they had no fear of Andrews understanding a word they uttered.

Edward Gaston rightly judged the character and disposition of his uncle when he assured Collin that, whilst the health of Hugh continued uncertain, the life of William would be safe. Not that we think the baronet, under any circumstances, would have brought himself to command the death of his grandson, especially since he had seen him. His intentions, at present, were simply to remove him.

More than once the ambitious man, whilst plotting against the boy, regretted that his heir did not possess the manly frame and robust vigor of his half-brother.

"In a distant land he may live," thought the baronet, as he paced the library at Moultree—"live, perchance, to become the founder of a race that must never bear my name.

"Never!" he added, emphatically. "The heir of the Gastons born in the poorhouse! It were enough to cause the dead in Wicksal church to burst their cerements. Never! never! In a week, at furthest, the vessel will sail from Penzance. Once on board, my cares will be over."

The agent—through whom he intended to rid himself of his grandson—was the unprincipled Beckford, whom Lady Cheverly had permitted to remain upon the Penswick estate at the urgent request of her father, contenting herself to limiting his powers. The latter had discovered the captain of a ship bound for Van Dieman's Land, a fellow every way suited to his purpose, who had agreed, for a certain sum, to land the unfortunate youth upon the coast, and leave him to fate.

As the baronet said, the vessel was to sail in a week. It was not a very long period for William's friends, then, to rescue him.

Lady Alicia was far too astute a person, and too well accustomed to her husband's moods, not to suspect, from his abstracted air, and the half-muttered sentences which frequently escaped him, that he had something of great importance on his hands; but, although anxiously desiring to discover the cause, she made no attempt to gain his confidence. She knew it would be useless. Since the death of Egbert, all such feelings had ceased between them.

The family were seated in the breakfast-room, a few mornings after the return of Sir Barnard, when the butler entered with the letter-bag, which he placed silently upon the table, and withdrew.

"Is there a letter from Hugh?" inquired his daughter-in-law, timidly.

The baronet handed her one.

The remaining two were addressed to himself. As he perused the first of them, his brow contracted, and a flush of anger suffused his features. It was from Lord Cheverly, in which the writer entreated him, for the honor of his name, to forego his designs against the ward of Collin Craw, and restore the boy to liberty.

"You know not the hostility you are provoking," urged the writer. "He has friends, who are devoted to his interests, who will never rest till they have discovered him. Pause, then, for the sake of all connected with you."

"Pshaw!" mentally ejaculated the reader; "does he take me for a child?"

An expression of surprise from the captain's widow attracted his attention, and he looked as if he desired to be informed what had occasioned it.

"Most extraordinary," said the lady. "Hugh writes me word that his friend—the brave, gallant youth who saved his life—has been carried off from the Rectory."

To this communication the baronet merely shrugged his shoulders, and broke the seal of the second letter.

It ran thus:

"Sir Barnard:—You have degraded yourself by an act of cruelty towards one who ought to possess a lasting claim upon your gratitude. It is no secret to the friends of William Earl, that you planned his abduction from the rectory at Woodfall, and carried it out through your agents. *Knowing your character*, those friends have been equally prompt in taking the precautions necessary for his safety. You will never see your grandson, Hugh Gaston, again, until the youth who saved his life is restored to liberty."

Although he regarded the letter more as an idle threat than the announcement of an accomplished fact, the iron-nerved man started from his chair in ill-concealed terror; the possibility of such a blow being struck alarmed him, and he bitterly blamed himself for not having removed Hugh to Moultree. Under his own eye, he could have answered, if not for his health, at least for his safety.

"What is the matter, grandpapa?" inquired the sister of Hugh, a gentle, loving little creature of fourteen. "No ill news of my brother?"

"No," replied the baronet, harshly.

At the same instant, as if to give the lie to his assertion, the Reverend Edward Hanslar was announced.

"The tutor of my son!" exclaimed the widow, greatly agitated. "You must permit me to see him."

"Madam!"

"I *will* see him!" added his daughter-in-law, with a firmness that astonished no one more than herself; "I have a mother's right. You need not frown, Sir Barnard; your anger has lost its power to terrify me; maternal love is stronger than fear."

Her daughter, although naturally timid and terribly afraid of her grandfather, could not endure the sight of her mother's grief, or the suspense of her own heart, but quietly glided out of the room with the intention of seeking the visitor.

Lady Alicia noticed her departure without attempting to check it; she rejoiced, rather than otherwise, at the embarrassment of her husband; it advanced, she hoped, the moment when he would find her assistance indispensable.

"Mrs. Gaston, you forget yourself," said the baronet, with cold dignity. "I beg that I may never be annoyed again by a repetition of such folly."

For some time the dispute ran high between them. The hitherto timid, submissive woman had suddenly found spirit to brave the wrath of her stern relative.

In the midst of it her daughter re-appeared, leading the rector by the hand.

"Here is the gentleman, mamma," she exclaimed; "he will tell you, I am sure, everything respecting my dear brother."

Sir Barnard recovered his self-possession in an instant; he was far too well-bred to permit any one to witness his dispute with a lady.

"I would have spared you the pain of hearing of Hugh's youthful folly," he observed. "He has run away from school—followed his friend—the boy whose——"

Before he could conclude, the widow of Captain Egbert had fainted; and the speaker, seizing the opportunity, led his visitor from the breakfast-table to the library.

"May I ask," inquired the clergyman, gravely, "how you became acquainted with this sad intelligence?"

The baronet placed the anonymous letter in his hand.

"Can anything be more preposterous?" he observed; "what possible interest can I have for planning the abduction of your pupil?"

"Your own heart alone can answer that question," replied the rector. "Man cannot judge the secret motives of his fellow-man. I travelled from London on purpose to lessen the blow by breaking the news to you in person."

"It is true, then? Hugh has left you?"

"Whether of his own free will, or by the agency of others, I cannot answer; but he has left me."

At this confirmation of his misfortune, Sir Barnard Gaston showed signs of confusion and dismay, and for the first time suspected that he was checkmated.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF US.

We are not born in Heaven, but in this world, where our being is to be preserved with meat, drink, and clothing, and other necessaries, that are not born with us, but must be got, and kept with forecast, care and labor; and, therefore, we cannot be all devotion, all praises and hallelujahs, and perpetually in the vision of things above. That is reserved for another state and place. Had it been otherwise, God would not have put us in a condition where we are obliged to use all means to preserve ourselves, and yet those means not to be had without employing upon the search of them the greatest part of our time and care.

But we are also born with dispositions to, and desires of society; we are by nature fitted for it, and religion increases the obligation. We are born members of commonwealths, beset with relations, and in need of friends, and under a necessity of acquaintance, which, requiring of us the mutual offices of familiarity, friendship and charity, we cannot spend all our time in retired devotion or study, nor in plodding or taking care of our worldly affairs. We are so framed, so constituted, that any employment of mind, any exercise of body, will weary and unfit us to continue long in that employment. The springs by which all our operations are performed are finite, and have their utmost extent; and when they approach that, like watches that have gone till their force is spent, we stand still or move to little purpose, if not wound up again. And thus, after labor of mind or body, we have need of recreation to set us going again with fresh vigor and activity.

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Discipline.—Discipline chastens the mind, and renders it amiable; it lays the proper basis on which to erect the character, adds to an excellent disposition a good understanding; and the individual rises to eminence, and diffuses happiness, where he exerts his influence. Upon a contrary basis, a character may be formed, imposing and splendid, but which, from want of symmetry, excites terror, rather than confidence. A clever man, who is not amiable, repels the prudent from the sphere of his influence. To unite a well-informed mind to a benevolent disposition, is a subject of such vast importance, that it cannot be contemplated in too many points of view.

WHAT ARE JUST WARS.

It ought never to be overlooked by a conscientious, moral and Christian people, that WARS, to be just, ought to be necessary; and to be necessary, can be waged only in self defence. And again, that, as without justice there can be no glory, so no glory can be acquired by victors in wars which are waged unjustly, unnecessarily, or offensively. Before glory is therefore ascribed to combatants, it is needful to examine seriously the previous questions whether their cause was just, and whether the war in which they were engaged might not have been avoided?

A DAY DREAM.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

A day dream by the dark-blue deep;
Was it a dream, or something more?
I sat where Posilipo's steep,
With its grey shelves, o'erhung the shore.

On ruined Roman walls around
The poppy flaunted, for 'twas May,
And at my feet, with gentle sound,
Broke the light billows of the bay.

I sat and watched the eternal flow
Of those smooth billows toward the shore;
While quivering lines of light, below,
Ran with them on the ocean floor.

Till, from the deep, there seemed to rise
White arms upon the waves outspread,
Young faces, lit with soft-blue eyes,
And smooth, round cheeks, just touched with red.

Their long, fair tresses, tinged with gold,
Lay floating on the ocean streams,
And such their brows as bards behold,
Love-stricken bards, in morning dreams.

Then moved their coral lips; a strain
Low, sweet and sorrowful I heard,
As if the murmurs of the main
Were shaped to syllable and word.

"The sight thou dimly dost behold,
Oh, stranger from a distant sky!
Was often, in the days of old,
Seen by the clear, believing eye.

"Then danced we on the wrinkled sand,
Sat in cool caverns by the sea,
Or, wandered up the bloomy land,
To talk with shepherds on the lea.

"To us, in storms, the seaman prayed,
And, where our rustic altars stood,
His little children came and laid
The fairest flowers of field and wood.

"Oh woe, a long, unending woe!
For who shall knit the ties again
That linked the sea-nymphs, long ago,
In kindly fellowship with men?

"Earth rears her flowers for us no more.
A half-remembered dream are we.
Unseen we haunt the sunny shore,
And swim, unmarked, the glassy sea.

"And we have none to love or aid,
But wander, heedless of mankind,
With shadows by the cloud-rack made,
With moaning wave and sighing wind.

"Yet sometimes, as in elder days,
We come before the painter's eye,
Or fix the sculptor's eager gaze,
With no profaner witness nigh.

"And then the words of men grow warm
With praise and wonder, asking where
The artist saw the perfect form
He copied forth in lines so fair."

As thus they spoke, with wavering sweep
Floated the graceful forms away;
Dimmer and dimmer, through the deep,
I saw the white arms gleam and play.

Fainter and fainter on mine ear
Fell the soft accents of their speech,
Till I, at last, could only hear
The waves run murmuring up the beach.

Cedarmere, November, 1860.

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FIGHT WITH A LEOPARD.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

A party of gentleman were one evening seated around the convivial board, amusing themselves with hot punch, cigars, anecdotes and stories, when, taking advantage of a pause in the conversation, a dapper little man, with a very red face, arose, and, clinking his glass against that of a portly gentleman seated opposite, said:

"Captain Trueman, your very good health, coupled with the request that we may now have the pleasure of hearing you narrate another of your adventures in Africa."

"A story from Captain Trueman!" was the unanimous call from all present, accompanied with a dozen times his health from as many eager speakers.

"Gentlemen," responded Captain Trueman, looking very modest, "I should like to oblige you—but really——"

"An adventure in Africa, and no excuse!" was the interrupting exclamation.

"An adventure in Africa, eh?" returned the Captain, stroking his chin thoughtfully. "Let me see! I think I have told you at one time and another, nearly everything of interest. Ah! stay! there is, I do believe, one story yet remaining—a thrilling encounter which myself and friend once had with a leopard. I wonder I should have forgotten it so long—for, my word for it, gentlemen, he remembers it every time he looks in the glass."

"Let us have the story—that is just the tale for us!" was the general response, amid the rattling of glasses and the relighting of cigars.

"I had spent much time in hunting in South Africa ere the event occurred which I am about to relate," resumed the Captain, as soon as order and silence were restored, "and had become well acquainted with the various modes of capturing and destroying all the different kinds of game. On the first of January, 1847, I crossed the great Orange river, and entered Colesburg, where I remained till March, and then left in company with the friend I speak of, Charles Manley, a capital hunter, and one of the finest, handsomest, best-hearted fellows in the world. He is not so good looking now, poor fellow, as he was then—but of that anon.

"After quitting Colesburg, we spent a few weeks most gloriously together, killing large numbers of the elephant, hippopotamus, rhinoceros, lion, and various other game, and were just making preparations for our return, when I was severely attacked with rheumatic fever, which completely prostrated me for several days. I did not bear my affliction with the patience of a Job, I assure you; for besides the pain I suffered, which was most acute and sometimes terrible, I chafed at the thought of being compelled to idleness like a beast in a cage.

"At length, when I had got so as to be able to sit up and hobble about my tent a little, I persuaded my friend Manley, who had been most assiduous in his attentions, to leave me and resume his hunting sports.

"'Have a care then, Captain!' he said playfully; 'and if you chance to hear a dog bark, or a rifle crack near you, don't imagine it is your province to be in at the death.'

"'Well, then,' returned I, 'knowing as you do my *penchant* for the chase, please don't tantalize me by allowing a dog to yelp or a gun to go off in my hearing.'

"In company with an Englishman by the name of Maxwell, and a few natives, my friend set off on the following morning, to hunt sea-cows along the Limpopo; and I, feeling like a prisoner chained down in sight of the glorious sunshine, overhauled my small stock of books for something to interest me, and tried to cheat myself with the idea that reading was a far more worthy and agreeable occupation than plunging through mud and water, bushes and brambles, in search of some dangerous beast, which might prove more injury than profit after all.

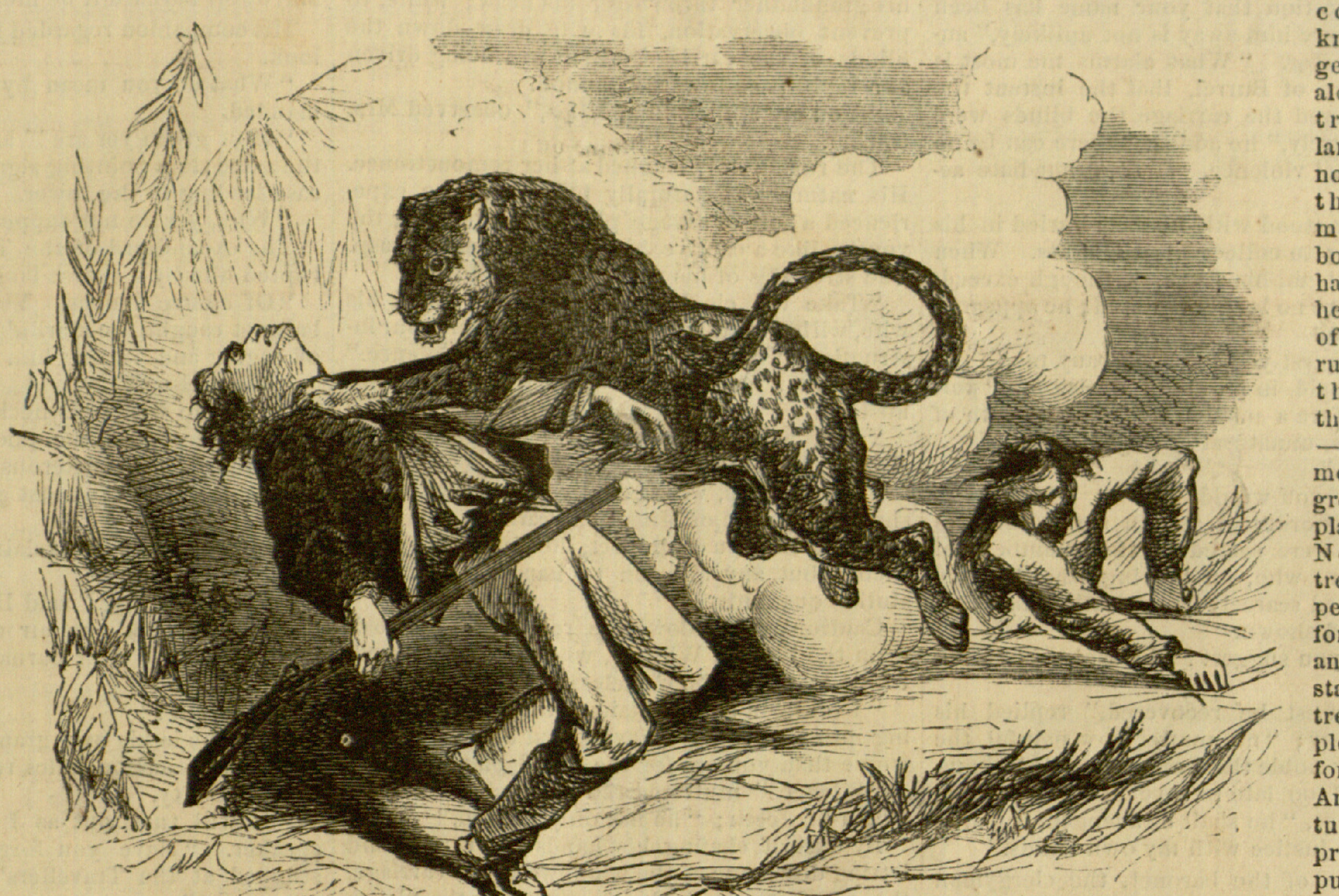
"I was in the midst of this philosophy, and was laboring to get myself into a state of happiness, between the twinges of my disease, when one of the unfeeling natives came bounding into my presence, saying that the party had fallen in with an immense male leopard and wanted a pair of my dogs.

"Confound the fellow! had he no regard for my feelings and my philosophy? I raised my book to throw it at his head; but thought better of it, and replied:

"'Take the dogs and go. But, hark you! If you let them yelp within my hearing, and thus compel me, by such attraction as no heathen like you can understand, to follow them, to my rheumatic discomfort, I would advise you to travel for your health.'

"I don't suppose he comprehended me—for, with a broad grin on his brown, ugly face, he unloosed a couple of the impatient animals and set off in haste; and I was just settling down to my book again, and trying to fancy myself happy, when crack, crack, went a couple of rifles, followed by several short, angry barks, some three or four sharp, wailing yelps, and several loud, excited shouts.

"Could human nature stand it? Some human natures might perhaps, but not one with as much hunter blood in it as mine; and so, sending my book flying, and my philosophy after it, I seized my rifle and set off for the scene of excitement, every step giving me about the same physical pleasure as an extra turn of the screw to some poor wretch on the rack.



"Luckily I had not far to go, for the whole party were within a stone's throw of our camp, and only concealed from me by the turn of a small hill; and as I gained the summit of this, which I did in much less time than I had thought possible, I at once obtained a view of the whole scene, and understood the exact position of affairs at a glance.

"The leopard, one of the largest of his species, was crouched in the centre of a narrow, open level, which ran along between the base of the hill and the river, and near him were stretched out my two dogs, bloody and dead, a sight that did not tend to put me in a very good humor. He had been badly wounded himself, and was now alternately licking the blood that flowed from his side, and growling defiance at his human enemies. At no great distance was my friend Manley, cool and collected, in the act of driving down his ball; Maxwell, covering the animal with his double-shooter, was near him, trembling like an aspen; and the natives, huddled together on the bank of the stream, were showing by their terrified looks that they contemplated a plunge into the water at the first alarming demonstration of the infuriated beast.

"I readily comprehended all that had taken place. The leopard from the very first had turned at bay, and Manley, as soon as the dogs had appeared, had given him the contents of both barrels of his rifle; the dogs, rushing in, had drawn his first revenge upon themselves; Maxwell, the poltroon, had been afraid to fire; the natives, with their spears in their almost paralyzed hands, had valiantly done the shouting; while the game-hearted beast, doubtless feeling himself growing weak, had been fain to pause and watch his enemies for the next aggressive act.

"It was now evident to me that the next shot, if not fatal, would rouse the beast to a furious charge; and believing that if Maxwell were to fire in his present state of trepidation, he would be almost as likely to hit me as the animal, I called out in eager haste:

"'Be careful how you shoot; that beast is dangerous.'

"'Oh, I—I—I'm not afraid!' stammered the fellow, turning his white face up at me, and speaking in a tone that belied his words.

"'Oh, no—he's not afraid—any one can see that!' laughed Manley, as he drew his rod from one barrel and thrust it down the other. 'But wait a moment, Captain, till I get this second ball home, and then I'll show Mr. Leopard there is another spot he'll not be able to change, and that is the spot where he is now."

"'Make sure of your aim, Charley,' I replied, 'or you'll have him upon you the next instant. Mr. Maxwell, since you don't intend to fire, will you be kind enough to uncock your piece, for fear it may go off untimely.'

The words were not fairly out of my mouth, when bang! bang! went both barrels, and then, like a bomb from a mortar, the leopard leaped into the air, and went bounding forward with his most ferocious cries. Quick as lightning, Manley brought his now loaded rifle to his shoulder, and fired one barrel; but if the shot took effect, it did not check the velocity or fury of the beast, and the next instant my friend was crushed to the earth beneath the infuriated animal, which at once began to lacerate his face, neck and breast in the most terrible manner.

"Fearing, if I fired from where I was, I might hit my friend as well as the leopard, I uttered a wild shout, and started to run down the hill, but every step I took drew from me a shriek of pain, and I was compelled to halt when about half way to the animal, which, startled by my cries, also paused in his bloody work, and looked fiercely round at me, with a grinning growl that displayed his hideous fangs.

"But where were Maxwell and the natives all this time, do you ask? In the waters of the Limpopo, swimming lustily for the opposite shore. I am not the best-tempered man in the world, as you all know, and had it not been for the critical condition of my friend, I do believe, even at the risk of my own life, I should have planted a ball in some portion of that coward's body. I only gave him a single glance and a thought, however, for the plaintive call of my friend drew every sense and faculty upon himself and enemy.

"'Fire, Trueman, for God's sake!' came to me in a tone that thrilled every nerve.

"'I am only afraid of hitting you, my dear Charley, for the beast has so covered you, that if the ball passes through him, you will receive it!'

"'Fire,' he returned, faintly, 'and let Providence guide it!'

"I raised my rifle as quick as I could, the angry beast all the while keeping his piercing eye upon me, and uttering his low, sullen, menacing growl, and taking aim at his head, directly between the eyes, I pulled the trigger. Ere the smoke rose, or I could tell the result of the shot, I felt a terrible blow against my breast, and fell backward, hurled violently to the ground, and with such excruciating pain that my senses deserted me.

"When consciousness returned, I found Charles Manley, his face and breast all bloody and mutilated, kneeling by my side and chafing my hands and body.

"'Thank God, you live, my noble friend!' he said, as he drew his hand across his eyes to clear them of blood and water.

"'And you, Charley?' I replied, remembering on the instant, everything that had occurred.

"'Oh, I shall do very well; only a few scratches; nothing to speak of.'

"'But you will never be called a handsome man, again,' said I, feeling that I must have my joke.

"'No,' he rejoined with a shrug of his shoulders, I shall now be compelled to wed a handsome wife—for, you know, Cap., all the handsomest women take hugely to the ugliest male specimens.'

"'But the leopard, Charley—what of him?"

"'There he lies, the wretch!' replied Manley, gently raising my head and showing me the sleek, spotted beast stretched out, dead, within six feet of me. 'You shot him directly through the brain; but ere the life went fairly out of him, he bounded to you with force enough to stretch you where you are; and as you fell backward, he dropped dead where you see him.'

"Thus we both escaped with life; but for the next few days I suffered terribly from a fresh attack of my disease. Manley was not long confined to camp with his wounds; but, as I had predicted, he never regained his beauty, and to this day he carries a painfully disfigured face. He has done what he said he would, however—married a very handsome and lovely woman, who thinks him the perfection of his sex, in mind and body. So we go. I suppose if I had been ugly I should have got married too.

"As for Maxwell, when he came sneaking into camp some hours later, and began to apologize for his conduct, I quietly informed him that the section of country where we were was supposed to be fatal to all foreigners afflicted with cowardice, and I would advise him to emigrate to a more salubrious clime. I believe he took the hint and emigrated—at least I have never seen him since.

"Gentlemen, your very good healths."

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THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.---No. 77.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

Do you know of any way to build a tree? We have made great improvements lately in castle building, cathedral building, mansion building, but I see no progress in tree building.

A man buys a place. If he have money enough he can turn the ground inside out in a few years. He can touch hills of rock, and they will disappear, like snow-banks in April. Or, if there be a flat and stupid level, he can heap up rocks, and build hills.

There, for instance, is the Central Park of New York. A more hopeless and discouraging spot never existed. It seemed as if the whole plat was in a state of insurrection against beauty or utility. But taste, skill, and money have transformed it. Its sullen, stagnant waters have sunk and gone off in hidden drains just as if they had been respectable brooks for a hundred years back; the swampy hollows are solid green dells; the uncouth rocks are exquisite knolls, or vine-clad, flower-laced hillocks, or if left savage, it is that they may by contrast heighten the loveliness of surrounding elegance. Lakes have been created, streams drawn out, bridges of surprising beauty thrown across them. The soil pierced with spade and plow, two feet deep, is made fertile. The place is surprised with new species of shrubs, new trees, the most picturesque groups of vegetation. Nor has it taken very much time, only a few years.

Such is modern skill. An old cathedral was building for fifty years, and then not finished. But the modern Houses of Parliament in England, vast as they are, ran up rapidly and solidly, and were begun and finished long before the son born at the laying of the corner stone had reached his majority. Old architects might aid in building several cathedrals, but never *successive* ones. In our day an architect might build three or four, one after the other. Thus *Time* is very much overcome in architecture and in landscape-gardening.

But we see no approach to such a victory over Trees. Before the cottage on the lawn, on a certain hillside, right opposite my "nearest neighbor," is an old pine tree. It is not handsome; it is better than that. Storms have broken its boughs. Ice and snow have done evilly by it in days past. But tall, rugged, unshapely, it towers up with solitary grandeur. All the companions that once grew near, are gone and their memorial perished. The Indians that, perhaps, walked under its branches, are exterminated. The tree says nothing of its long experience. Lying under it, in a summer's day, and watching the dance of its plumy branches against the drifting clouds or the ever tranquil blue of heaven, I have questioned it: "Art thou a chance seedling dropt in this spot? Or wert thou one of a forest of pines?" Only a gentle cadence of sad, murmuring sighs came down in response. Is there tree-language? I could make nothing of the inarticulate confession. But to all my questions, some answer is returned. If the day is moody, and winds sweep out rapidly, the tree sounds down harsh and wild. If the winds come gently, a low and musical murmur gives its answer. If there be calm in the air, birds gather up the thoughts of the old tree and send them down to us in their own sweet language.

Now, can you help one in my particular difficulty? I wish several more just such trees, and have not got them. Down in the lower corner, one would be very acceptable. If one of the pines should be *oak*, I would not object, and another may be beech. But they must all have heard the British cannon in the Revolutionary war. I wish them to have stood on this place before white men came hither,—old world trees, hoary and venerable! Alas, what is skill, and what are man's boasted powers worth, when he cannot achieve so small a thing as this?

Away with your little whipster trees from the nursery, that for years to come will only yield you rods of correction for impudent children! Out upon the trees transplanted from the fields, that make believe grow, but stand like an awkward man in wrong company, not knowing how to get out, or to get along. And as to transplanting large trees, we do not believe in the thing. A large, massive, wide-boughed oak, that has shook his old head at a century of storms, as they rushed at him over the hills, and threshed them all,—why, one must move an acre of ground to transplant such a tree! No, no; young trees, like young people, can conform to change and new circumstances. But old trees, like old people, do not easily form new habits. And though nature has a most provoking way of putting fine things where you do not want them, and leaving them out just where you would have them, we cannot help ourselves. We shall have to let it be so.

For instance, as you ride south of Peekskill, and cross under the railroad bridge, you ascend the hill, along a piece of wood that makes me break one of the Commandments (thou shalt not covet, etc.), every time I ride past. Such wealth of rocks!—such cool shades!—such mosses and ferns!—such queer tumblings and pilings of cleft and shattered rocks! Trees there are growing in their rifts; shrubs nodding on their tops; all manner of device, in vine and shrub, fringing them. Then they are so dark, so gloomy in spots; so gray and clear in others, that I *must* have that piece of ground and rock moved up to my hill-side. Will you help me? I am not yet clear as to the ways and means. Or, just because nature put it there, must it be left, and all of us be compelled to live in a vain longing? Can not some of those who invent so many processes to take advantage of nature, devise some way to *condense time*, and enable us to make new things old from the start? Some men seem to begin that way—why not trees?

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. H. H.—The late Mr. S. G. Goodrich (Peter Parley), who was American consul at Paris at the time of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'etat*, estimates the number who fell in the streets under the fire of the troops on that occasion, at fifteen hundred. The number of persons thrown into prison throughout France, he states to have been forty thousand. "The soldiers," says Mr. Goodrich, "fired upon all they saw in the streets. An old woman going along with a loaf of bread had a bullet put through her. An apothecary who ventured to appear at his own door instantly received a ball in his forehead. Files of soldiers poured their volleys upon the innocent people passing along the Boulevard; shots were fired at the windows of private houses; seven persons were killed in a bookseller's shop. One of my friends saw seventeen dead bodies in one gutter. These persons thus slaughtered were not rioters working at the barricades; they were mostly gentlemen; and hence it was called the massacre of the kid gloves. The soldiers had evidently been stimulated by liquor to qualify them to perform this butchery." Mr. Goodrich walked through the streets after the firing was over, and saw many houses covered with bullet marks and riddled by cannon shot. He expressed the opinion that the massacre was utterly wanton and unnecessary. We give you the authority of this gentleman because he was an eyewitness and wholly disinterested.

Quandary.—We answer your question with regard to the forgiveness of injuries thus: It is the duty of erring mortals to forgive every injury that is acknowledged and repented of; but it does not follow, that we are bound to restore the man who has cruelly wronged us to his former place in our esteem, however sincere his repentance may be. In many cases, this were simply impossible, and we are not required to perform impossibilities. Nor are we bound, in all cases, to accept mere verbal assurances of repentance. For example, your friend insulted your wife when he was intoxicated; he has apologized and implored your forgiveness; but has he given evidence of his resolution and ability to refrain from excesses in future? Forgive him by all means; but whether or not you should receive him again into your house ought to depend upon his future conduct. A man who is liable to get drunk only once a year is an unsafe friend, and, in every relation in life, untrustworthy.

L. L. S.—"One rainy day," says this correspondent, "I went out and took an umbrella with me, and while I was walking along I met two ladies, strangers to me, who had no umbrella, and I said: 'Ladies, will you take this umbrella? you can return it to such a place' (naming it). One of them took the umbrella. When I went home I asked my brother whether I had done right, and he said that I ought to be ashamed of myself to speak to ladies whom I did not know. Now, sir, *did* I do right?" We think you did perfectly right, and we rejoice to live in a country were an action so proper, frank, natural and kind can be done without danger of misconstruction. In some large cities it might not always be best to presume so far, but we hold fast to our doctrine, that a kind act, done in sincerity, is never impolite and seldom improper.

Marion.—Prepare the manuscript of your book just as you wish to have it printed. When it is finished, you cannot do better than to take or send it yourself to a publisher. The interposition of friends is of little avail in such affairs. Friends cannot induce a publisher to risk his money upon a book which he believes will not sell, and if your book is saleable he will be as desirous to publish it as you can be to have it published. Publishers, as a class, are disposed to be liberal toward authors, and you will find them very agreeable men to know and deal with. At the same time, you must bear in mind, that they are obliged to take a purely business view of all literary schemes. If they did not, neither publishers nor authors would be able to live.

Election. — The custom of celebrating election triumphs by bonfires probably grew out of the ancient mode of communicating intelligence by means of fires lighted upon hills and promontories. It was common in old times to announce a victory, or a successful invasion, in this manner, as well as to summon the people of a district to arms. Hence may have arisen the custom of celebrating any event of public interest by bonfires.

Jean.—You cannot be the second mate of a vessel without having served for some years as a sailor. The second mate, for several hours in the twenty-four, has charge of the ship, and, in case of the death or sickness of the captain and first mate, would have to take the command. You must go before the mast if you wish to "follow the sea."

C. L. S.—If, in walking along the street, you should accidentally tread upon a lady's dress, with whom you are unacquainted, is it proper to raise your hat while offering her an apology? Most proper, sir, and see that you do it gracefully.

Lucy Ann.—Is it consistent with manliness to kneel while making an offer of marriage? It is not. The man who would do so is either a fool or a knave.

C. C.—It was not in New England alone that the Quakers were persecuted. The old records of New York show that in 1657 certain Quakers were sent to prison for preaching in the streets, and their leader flogged through the town tied to a cart. It was a town ordinance, at that day, that any person giving shelter to a Quaker for one night should be fined fifty pounds. On one other point, we believe, you are mistaken. The odium in which Quakers were held two centuries ago was not caused solely by their peculiar mode of worship. The colonists were then surrounded by formidable tribes of Indians, necessitating costly measures of defence, and, occasionally, a hostile expedition. Now, the Quakers, being conscientiously opposed to war in all its forms, not only refused to bear arms, but shrunk from paying their proportion of the expense of defending the country. In the opinion of many authorities, this was the real cause of their unpopularity among the masses of the people. You will find in the records of Pennsylvania plenty of evidence to support this view of the subject.

Rushlight says that the school which he is attending, is rent in two factions on the following question: "Is it grammatically correct to say 2 times 2 *is* four; or, should we not rather say 2 times 2 *are* four? The teacher of the school," says our correspondent, "takes sides with the *is* faction; while all the grammar girls, and most of the boys go in for the *ares*. What does the Ledger say?" We vote with the girls and "most of the boys." The word *times* is certainly plural; it is equally certain that it is the nominative in the sentence given; it is also certain that "a verb must agree with its nominative in *number* and person;" therefore the plural nominative *times* requires the plural verb are; wherefore "2 times 2 *are* 4," is correct, while "2 times 2 *is* 4," is wrong.

Dardanelles.—We do not profess to be able to say "what is to become of the Turkish empire." It will probably pass away, under modified forms and conditions, in the course of time, and perhaps be extinguished totally, as the empires of Media, Babylon, and other pagan governments have been. But how, or when, or by what agency, this ultimate result is to be accomplished, it is impossible to say.

C. H.—This correspondent informs us that the custom of stopping the clocks in a house wherein a corpse lies prevails in Germany, where also it is considered indecorous to speak above a whisper in such a house. The custom, he thinks, is simply a manifestation of respect for the dead, and is designed to produce that complete silence which is supposed to be the most proper token of respect.

Cosmos—How can you expect fidelity in love from a child? She liked you well enough, no doubt, before she went away to school, but during her absence she grew from a child to a woman. You must begin your wooing over again, Mr. Cosmos, if you wish to win affection of the kind that will last.

Suspense.—Here is another question that appears to have been suggested by the great Sound controversy: "If there were no light, would there be any color?" The shade of Sir Isaac Newton answers no, and the last time we were in a dark room we found reason to believe that Sir Isaac is not far wrong.

Scribe.—Your "old teacher" could not have heard the operas of *La Sonnambula* and *Norma* performed over fifty years ago, for the reason that they were not then composed.

E. M. W.—We do not know what branch of the church the author to whom you refer belongs; we know him, however, to be a good man.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

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THE LEDGER FOR 1861.

We intend to make the Ledger for 1861 superior to that of 1860, or of any other year in the past. Among our contributors will be the President of the United States, Edward Everett, George Bancroft, William Cullen Bryant, John G. Saxe, George P. Morris, N. P. Willis, George D. Prentice, Thomas Dunn English, Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., Emerson Bennett, William Ross Wallace, T. S. Arthur, P. Hamilton Myers, Col. Walter B. Dunlap, S. Compton Smith, John Esten Cooke, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Southworth, Fanny Fern, Anna Cora Ritchie, Alice Cary, Mary Forrest, Marion Harland, Miss E. A. Dupuy, Mary Stanley Gibson, Phœbe Cary, and many clergymen, professors in colleges, statesmen, and other eminent writers residing in different parts of the Union.

Our *corps* of contributors for the coming year will be so large, and will embrace such a variety of eminent talent, that every department of literature will receive the particular attention of some one competent to do it ample and special justice. Whether it be popular romance, scientific essay, historical sketch, scholastic disquisition, spicy paragraph, pathetic ballad, humorous poem, old-fashioned love story, timely editorial, or any other ingredient of popular and elevated journalism, that is to be furnished, the Ledger *corps* will be sufficient for the task. In fact, our contributors will send us from week to week much more matter than we can possibly use, so that we shall always have a fresh and superabundant supply from which to select THE VERY BEST. These facts, taken in connection with our largely increased means, facilities and experience, warrant us, we think, in promising our readers a family paper for the year 1861 which will be more interesting and instructive, and in every respect more valuable, even than the Ledger has been in the past.

As an indication of the popularity of the Ledger, we need only state the simple fact that its circulation is larger than that of any other TEN literary papers in the country. Its great success is owing to the fact that we secure the best writers in the country, and spare no expense in getting up the BEST FAMILY PAPER—a paper of high moral tone. The exalted reputation of its contributors, the practical and invariably pure and healthy character of all its articles, the care which is taken that not even one offensive word shall appear in its columns, and the superiority of its Tales and Sketches, have gained for the New York Ledger a position that no literary paper has ever before reached.

Anna Cora Ritchie, of Richmond, Va., and Col. Walter B. Dunlap, the author of the popular "Forest Sketches" which were published in our columns some time since, will each begin a story in the Ledger early in the new year. Mrs. Southworth is also engaged upon a new tale.

As this is the season of the year when Postmasters and others are in the habit of forming clubs, we direct their particular attention to

OUR TERMS.

Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free* for his trouble. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail.

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